A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
No. 22 FEBRUARY 1987
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ZZAP! 64

MONTHLY REVIEW FOR COMMODORE SOFTWARE



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ISSUE 22 FEBRUARY 1987

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A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION

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MEMBER OF THE AUDIT BUREAU OF CIRCULATIONS

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NORMAL BITS

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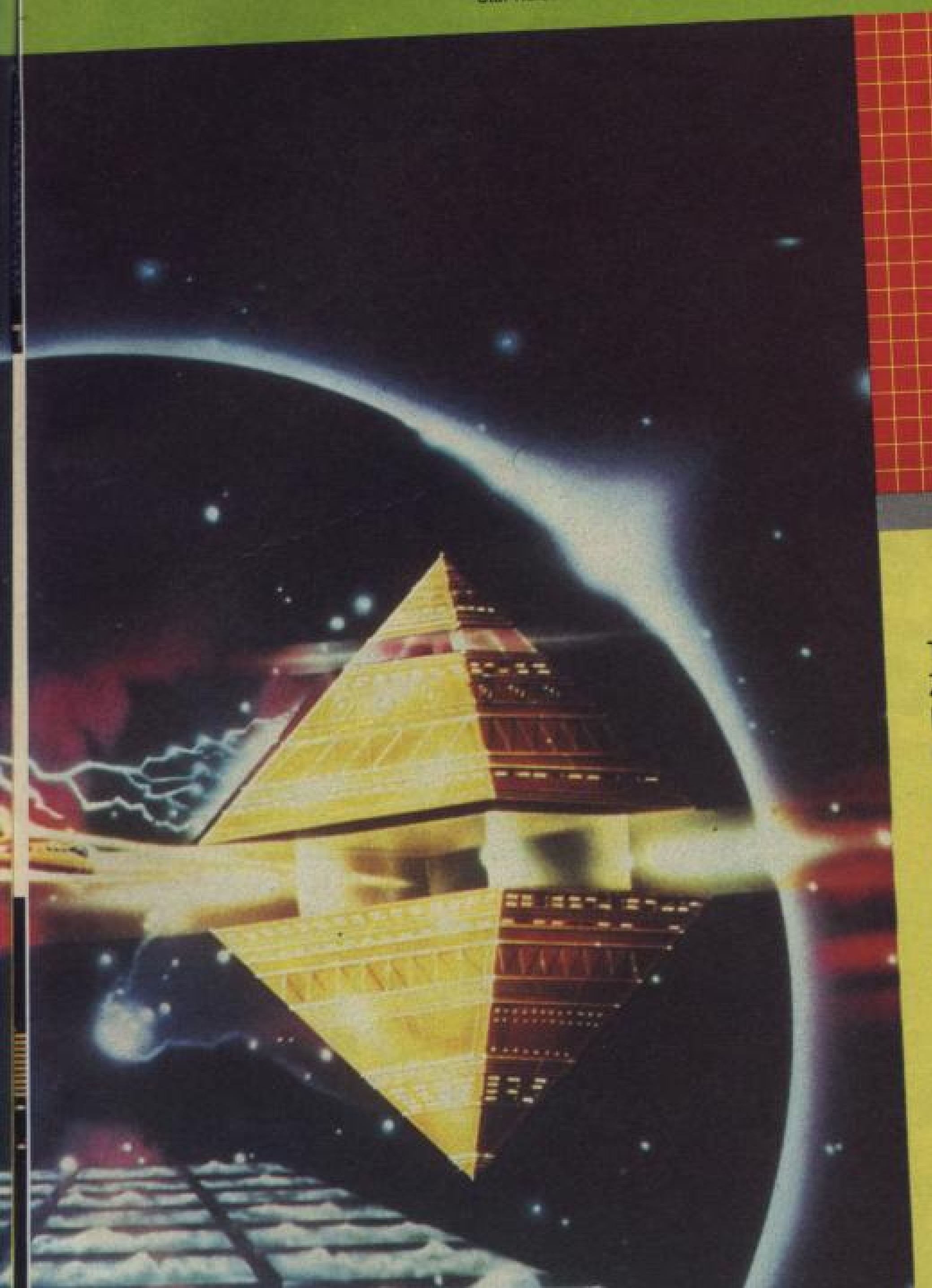


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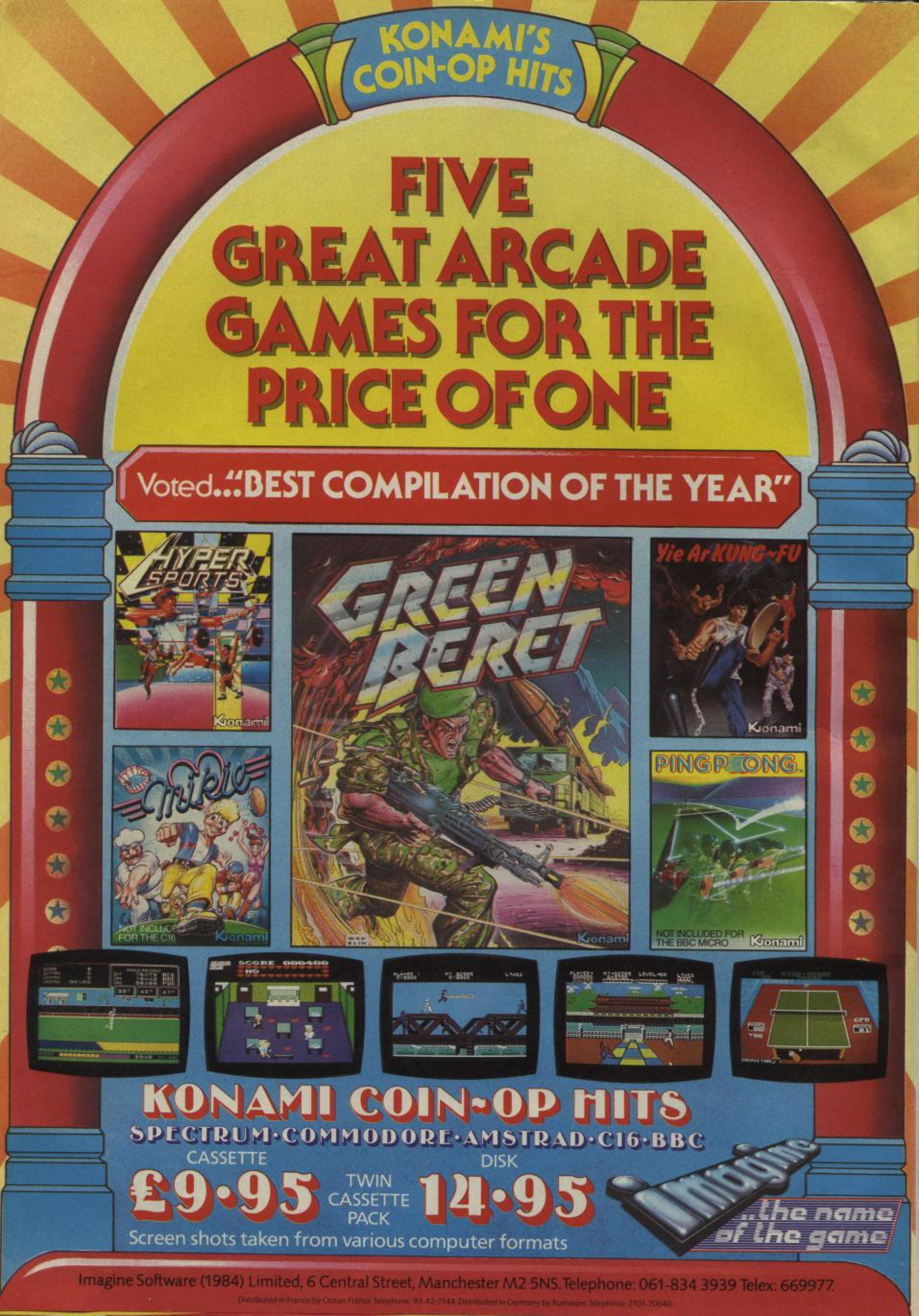
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ZZAP! ED

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF 87

It seems that the Christmas Special disappointed a few readers – sad, and surprising, as a lot of effort went into what I felt was a substantial festive read. Still, everyone is entitled to their own opinion. The lack of games reviews however, was unavoidable. We reviewed every new piece of software available before our deadlines. How could we review games that didn't exist at the time of writing? As for the price . . . well, unfortunately that is entirely out of my hands. Hopefully this issue will impress, what with a staggering 53 pages of reviews – encompassing 44 Commodore 64 games in total! Now that's what I call 'more games reviews than any other magazine' . . . there are a few 'exclusives' (for what they are worth). But then more often than not an 'exclusive' review is all down to correctly calculating the opposition's editorial deadlines . . . or just using the 'EXCLUSIVE' headline. When it boils down to it, every single game we review in this issue is looked at for the first time in ZZAP! So there. An issue full of 'First Looks'! *(Holds thumb to nose.)* Nyah nyah.

Surprisingly, we were flooded with software for review this issue – over SEVENTY games arrived within the space of a few weeks! Unfortunately we didn't have time to review them all . . . But with the flood came much flotsam and jetsam – mostly bitterly disappointing or mediocre conversions and tie-ins. I suppose I could have been overwhelmed by the sheer volume of software, or maybe it's abject cynicism on my part . . . There again, there seems to be rather more mediocrity around at the moment. Let's hope things aren't going to stay this way throughout the year.



ADVERTISERS' INDEX

GAMES REVIEWED

THE ZZAP! RATINGS

A brief guide as to how we rate software . . .

ZZAP! ratings are derived by taking an average of ratings from THREE reviewers. A brief discussion (which has been known to turn into a minor battle) decides the final outcome. Our aim is to reduce the margin for error by using three people who offer their opinions.

At the top end of the scale is the ZZAP! GOLD MEDAL – a prestigeous award given to what we regard as 'state of the art' software, worthy of anybody's attention. Such exceptional software is rare however, so there may not be a Gold Medal awarded every month. Occasionally though, there may be two . . .

A ZZAP! SIZZLER is bestowed upon games which score around 90% We feel that a ZZAP! Sizzler represents a great buy – unless you hate that particular type of game.

Very Good games usually score around 80%; Good games lurk in the late sixties and early seventies, while average games are in the vicinity of the 50% mark. Anything rated below this we would regard as a 'tentative' purchase, to be approached warily in the shop.

PRESENTATION: Packaging, printed instructions, on-screen instructions, loading, play options, program facilities (including things like ease of joystick or keyboard control), on-screen impression — everything except the game itself.

GRAPHICS: Variety, detail and effectiveness of screen pictures, quality of animation, smoothness of movement.

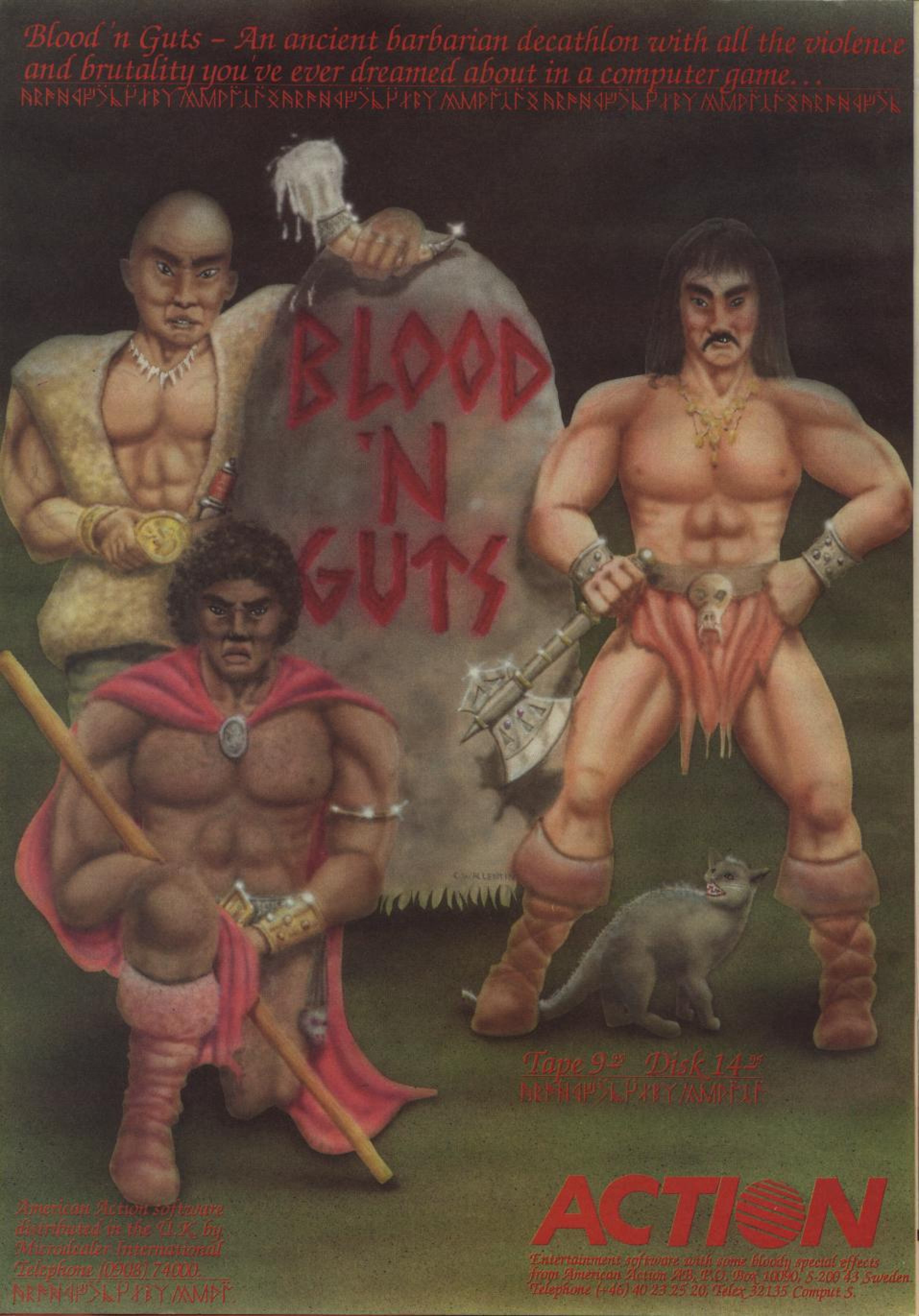
SOUND: Variety and effectiveness of sound effects, quality both technically and aesthetically of music. Also: does sound annoy?

HOOKABILITY: How strongly does the game make you want to play it and keep playing it?

LASTABILITY: How long will it keep its hold on you?

VALUE: NOT an average of the above ratings since some ratings are more important than others. ALL the preceding ratings and the price are taken into consideration.

OVERALL: This is IT! Our opinion of the game – and you can use this rating as a guideline when comparing games if you like. We do.



Blood 'n Guts – An ancient barbarian decathlon with all the violence and brutality you've ever dreamed about in a computer game...
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So starts the New Year. What on earth will 1987 bring us all? For a start off, it's brought in a ton-load of software that should have been ready before Christmas, and kept everyone quite busy, right over the holiday break. One helping of Christmas pud for G P, and it was back to work with a will, and something approaching a smile on those stern lips. For me, there's all the work involved in sorting out agonising problems for LM readers (as well as consoling the LM team with their own little personal hicoughs – it's amazing how quickly you can become a professional agony uncle!) as well as continuing to answer letters on CRASH and, of course, ZZAP!

Still, we can be sure that the usual round of computer concerns will turn up in the letters. Straight to business, then, and £20 worth of software to this first Letter Of The Month for 1987 . . .

HACK'EM, I SAY

Dear Lloyd,
In reply to Mark Roberts' letter of issue 20; if none of the offerings of today's software houses come up to your personal scratch, then why bother wasting your time on them?

For instance, although the ZZAP! team appear to agree with you about *Dragon's Lair* (69% – which does not give any false impressions to readers), the rest of the public seem to have found the addictiveness that escapes you and thus it is fast rising in the charts. Simply because you do not like it does not mean that it was not worth publishing. Au contraire, its sales have obviously made money for Software Projects and therefore fulfilled their object in releasing it.

On a less direct note, I draw to the all-consuming problem of piracy. I realise that products such as Datel's Fast Hackem mean well for backups, but they can all too often be used for commercial and private copies. I suppose the damage is done now, but would it not have been safer for only software houses to obtain such programs and then the individual could obtain a backup, for a small charge, via them? This would help to cut down on piracy and provide extra money for the software industry.
Trevor Sather, 4 Kingslawn Close, Howards Lane, London SW15 62J

Not a bad idea, Trevor, but better still, why don't software houses 'gang up' on the producers of back-up cartridges and slap on some form of 'compensation taxation', thus boosting the price of these foul utilities and putting them out of reach of the majority people who want to rip off software. Sadly, a rather difficult undertaking, I suspect. Still, thank you for your sensible attitude, and your software prize is on its way.

The subject of back-up utilities has resulted in several sensible letters on the subject – here's another . . .

LM

Dear Lloyd,
I recently was looking through issue 18 when I came across something which surprised and angered me greatly. It was the part in the tips section about a cartridge copier (the Expert Cartridge). The article blabbed on about how useful the cartridge was and undoubtedly caught the eye of many readers, many of whom may have purchased the product. When they received the cartridge they would have seen how it could be used for pirating. A lot of them wouldn't have thought it wrong to copy a game, 'after all, it was in ZZAP!'

Even if you didn't mention the pirating capabilities of the utility, it was irresponsible for you (a magazine which should be trying to combat piracy) to devote a whole page to an instrument which is ruining the software industry.
Nadim Meer, London NW11

After consulting with my learned colleague, Gary Penn, we've decided that no more Expert Cartridge tips will be featured in ZZAP! It was another 'test' to see how it went down with readers, but I think we're all pretty much agreed that whilst piracy will always be with us, it isn't for a software magazine to aid it in any way.

In CRASH, tape-to-tape back-up ads were always banned (although the odd mistake has slipped through now and again), but in ZZAP! there was the argument that tape-to-disk utility ads were kosher. You will no doubt be pleased to know that we are now looking seriously at banning them.
LM

UNBEARABLE

Dear ZZAP!
After reading your review of *Bobby Bearing*, I thought it looked good and decided to buy it, but I had no money. So when I got the chance to do some work, I took it. After a very hard day's work I had earned a tenner, and the next day went to my local computer store to buy it.

I wanted to try it out first but their 64 had broken, so I just bought it on the strength of your review. When I got home and loaded it up and started to play, I noticed something was missing. There was no sound.

I went back to the shop to see what was wrong, and told them how many points it got in ZZAP! for sound. They said ZZAP! had got it wrong, *Bobby Bearing* had no sound. Just to check I rang up The Edge in London and they said that only the disk version had sound.

Why didn't you say this in the review? you just put 'The Edge £9.95 cass', no mention of a disk version. I presume you reviewed the disk version, but you should have checked both versions of the game.

I think that I have just thrown a tenner of hard earned cash down the drain, as *Bobby Bearing* is extremely boring without sound.
Iain Brown, Leicester

According to Gary, we reviewed a pre-production cassette version – minus sound. BUT, we were told by The Edge that the music heard on the review disk copy WOULD be featured on the cassette version.

Why the music should feature ONLY on the disk version, as it has turned out, I don't know. I mean, if the music can be implemented in the single-load disk version, then surely it should appear on the cassette version? Still, everyone's opinion here is that it's still a damned good game even without sound.
LM

THE HERO-IN MY COMIC

Dear Lloyd,
I sent you a letter accompanied with a short comic strip several months ago; in fact I think it was way back in May. The comic was basically a computer version of the anti-drugs advert where this teenager says he can stop taking heroin whenever he wants to. You know the one I'm talking about.

Well mine was based on a boy who played too many computer games, who was a suffering games addict which resulted in him snuffing it, retiring, dying whichever you prefer. It was basically a joke because people don't really die from playing computer games, do they?

If you thought my comic strip was in bad taste and that was the real reason you didn't print it, then I understand.

But several months later in ZZAP! 18, page 98, what do I see but something very similar to my comic. Not a comic strip but an advertisement for ZZAP! subscriptions, and what happen's if you miss an issue, showing a small boy in a dirty T-Shirt holding a joystick.

Anyway, Lloyd old chum, I'm not blaming you. My guess is you threw the comic in the dustbin and Mr Frey happened to find it while he was looking for his paintbrush and thought it would make a nice ad for ZZAP!, who knows?

Still my family and friends know where the idea for the ZZAP! ad came from, so everything;s not so bad, but I would just like an explanation that's all.
Reza Tootoonchian, Finchley Central, London

I'm sorry to have to disappoint you, Reza, but the advert was dreamed up long before I ever saw your cartoon. In fact it might have appeared two issues before it did except that other things got in its way. Also, the ad was conceived by Gary Penn, not Oliver Frey – although he did artwork of course. A question of great minds thinking alike, perhaps?
LM



ZZAP! RRAP

TOO HIGH

Dear Lloyd,
I think the ratings you give software have got you into a spot of bother.

In the first issue, a Sizzler received between 80 and 90%. Now, a Sizzler must score either 95 or 96%. Gold medal games used to get around 92 to 94%; but to be a Gold Medal these days it must score 97 or 98%.

If for example, a game received 96%, ie: *Scarabaeus* and *Koronis Rift*, it would not be a Gold Medal but a Sizzler. So what are you going to do when a really brilliant game comes along? I expect there will be a *World Games II*, so what if it loaded really fast, and had unbelievable graphics and animation? 99% would be the most it could receive. It could not get less if it was better than *World Games I*, and could not get more because 100% means perfect. So you've got a problem to sort out.

I agree that software these days is better than it was, but you've overrated it by far.

But that's enough for that matter. Just one other point to mention, although this is going back quite some time, why did the sound rating for *Superbowl* get 18% yet *Hyper Sports* received 98%? Okay, so *Hyper Sports* has good sound effects and the 'Chariots of Fire' tune, but it's the same loading music as *Superbowl*. Can you tell me why please?
Brian Wheeler, Market Harborough, Leicestershire

The Gold Medal award is for state-of-the-art programs, just about plum perfect, so 97% seems to be an adequate minimum. Superbowl *has hardly any sound (apart from the bog-standard Ocean loading music), whereas* Hypersports *has loads of great spot FX and a jolly nice title-screen tune.*
LM

COMPLAINTS CORNER

N-N-N-N-NINETEEN

Dear ZZAP!
This is not really a complaint to you, but to US Gold.

I was working my way through the November ZZAP! when I came to an advertisement which caught my eye. It was for *Vietnam* and a pathetic little phrase underneath which read, 'They knew it as hell. You knew it as VIETNAM'.

This was plastered all over the page in big red letters. US Gold should have thought of a better name for the game than this one, which I think is offensive. I don't know anyone who served in Vietnam, I'm just thinking about the people who did, and the last thing they want is their children or grandchildren reading about it and asking questions about Vietnam.
Gavin Greenhalgh, Farnmouth, Bolton

I confess to be puzzled, Gavin. Why shouldn't they want anyone asking questions about it? It undoubtedly was hell for those who lived through it, but then so was World War I and II. I've no doubt the battle of Edge Hill was pretty terrible as well, but when an event is history it also becomes part of the public domain – suitable material for discussion. If you're saying that the game is a trivialisation of a dreadful time people still remember, then so is the film Rambo, *but most viewers enjoyed that, as earlier cinemagoers loved* The Dirty Dozen *and many other WW II movies.*
LM

MISSING SRM

Dear ZZAP!
Looking through some back issues of ZZAP! 64 I noticed in the June issue on page 64 that Rainbow Electronics were selling an SRM for £15.70 only from mail order. I forked out for the postal order and sent it off to them. After about five weeks I hadn't received or heard anything from Rainbow Electronics so I decided to write to you for help, and ask them why they hadn't sent me my SRM. Please can you help me?
Mark Edwards, Shard End, Birmingham

Have you tried writing to Rainbow Electronics or ringing them up? It may be that their offer is no longer running, but if that is the case then you ought to have heard something. Anyone at Rainbow who can help?

Another writer has been having trouble with software clubs . . .
LM

Dear ZZAP!
Having been invited to join several software clubs after buying a game, I can only say that I have been left with a sour taste in my mouth.

I paid £9.95 to join the US Gold club, for which I was to receive a sweatshirt and regular news letters. To date I have received a sweatshirt, a membership card (No 6476) and a few A4 sized posters. I joined the club at the beginning of the year and have received nothing since.

Even worse is the club belonging to The Edge with their promises of newsletters containing profiles of their programmers and a T-Shirt all at a cost of £6. After sending my money in January and after several phone calls I eventually obtained my T-Shirt but have received nothing more.

Despite two applications I still have not had a reply from Odin.

I would advise anyone thinking of joining the above clubs or any others for that matter to save their money and buy a good game. You'll get less hassle and more enjoyment out of it.

On the bright side, Firebird's Quicksilver Club costs £1.99 and gets you a free silver game of your choice, a pen, a membership card and a badge plus newsletter. The two letters I have received have been great. Keep up the good work Firebird (my membership number is 667).

Please print my full name and address so the guilty parties above may write to me regarding their so called clubs.
Mr A D Brown, 57 Maple Grove, Whitby, South Wirral, Cheshire L66 2PE

Okay, software clubs, get writing!

One more complaint from a reader, this time about ZZAP! Mail Order itself. You can't say we're not fair . . .
LM

Dear Lloyd,
I've given up trying to be polite, so now I am going to tell you what I think of your so called magazine. You gas about your rivals being dishonest with their reviewing games early on preview copies, while all the time you're conning readers out of cash on your so called 'offers'.

Over three months ago I sent £7.95 to you and what have I received since then? Nothing – that's what, not a peep. Well I did get a string of vague promises when I phoned that proved to be outright lies. 'Oh yes we have got the games just now, they are being sent off tomorrow.' That was the first time I called.

'Oh they are a little late, but tomorrow I am posting them.' That was two weeks later.

'You should receive your game soon, it's in the post.'

Yet another two weeks later.

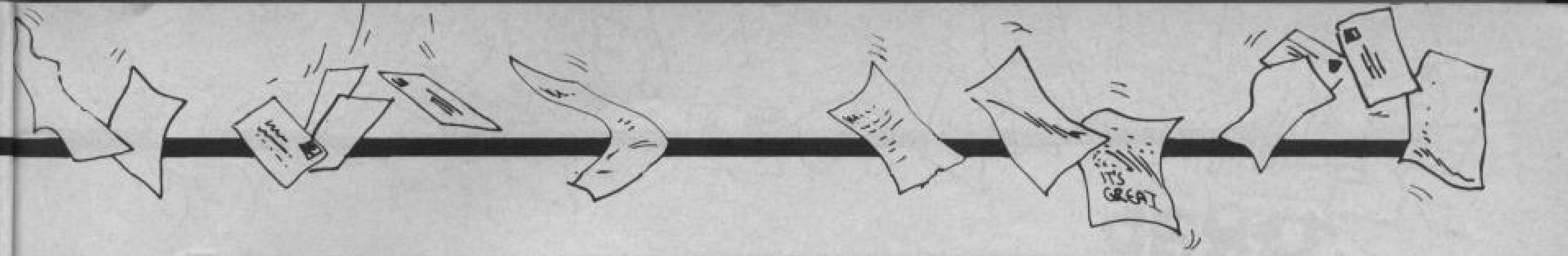
After writing to you (Carol actually) and then waiting for a reply, I rang up again to be told, 'Oh I've just received the letter this morning, your money will be coming back soon.'

Can't you ever the tell the truth? To be honest I feel sorry for all the other readers who are going to have this trouble when they send off for any other of your so called offers, and I shudder to think of all the money you have stolen off all those readers you boast about. I wonder how much money you made out of the *Leader Board* con alone, never mind the *Super Cycle* and *Forbidden Forest II* offer which I almost sent you money for.

It makes me sick to think that a company with such a good track record of producing such quality magazines should be corrupt. You can count on me never to send you money again, and I can only hope that other readers don't before they lose too much through trusting you.
Gavin Naylor, Mansfield, Notts

It's a pity you didn't say what particular offer this was. I can assure you that no one is being robbed – after all, you received your money back. Well over 95% of any mail order or special offers go through smoothly, but sometimes there are delivery problems, sometimes the producers' own stock runs out, and sometimes the sheer volume overwhelms the system – especially on popular offers. When you ring up, they try to be as helpful as possible, but your order may be one that doesn't quite make it before a supply runs short, and then there's a delay in restocking.

I know from my own experience of buying by mail, that delays can be most frustrating, but very few of the 30,000 odd Newsfield orders a month cause any trouble. For my own part, I'm sorry you have experienced problems, Gavin, but that doesn't mean you should impute such disgusting motives to us, or accuse us of 'conning' anyone.
LM



I'M TOO POLITE

Dear Lloyd,
Flicking through ZZAP! I decided to write you a letter, but because your magazine is such a brilliant one, I couldn't find anything to moan about. So I'm going to moan about Elite the software house not the game. I bought a copy of *Ghosts 'n' Goblins* after your inspiring review. Well, I loaded it as fast as I could, waited a bit, loading screen was fine. Finally, it loaded, but it didn't work. So after a few tries I took it back.

Boots kindly gave me a new copy, but the same thing happened again. You can't get past the Ice Palace, it just crashes almost every time. I had about four copies of the game, and my tape heads re-aligned. The strange thing is that every other game I've got loads fine. So I sent it back to the address given. It's now been a good month, if not two, and I have had no reply. I don't think this is very good, do you?

Should I wait longer? Or should I write another which won't be quite so polite.
Mark Purser, Radcliffe-On-Trent, Notts

I shouldn't wait any longer, Mark. Ring up, or write again and complain. There shouldn't be any problem in getting Elite to exchange the tape.
LM

DISKGUSTED

Dear Lloyd,
I now introduce, not a tale of woe, but a tale of warning, and of hype.

At the PCW show, I purchased a pack of 25 disks from DDS UK. With them came a little leaflet-cum-advertising slip. It contained words to the tune of: 'All disks have a lifetime warranty' and 'Lifetime warranty means 100% error free, or we replace every one faulty disk with two.'

I state 'to the tune of' because when I sent them back I **had** to enclose the leaflet, thus losing my proof . . .

I found that 13 of the 25 disks were faulty; they were of very poor quality and would not format.

I phoned DDS. A Richard Mortimer answered (at 1.55 pm, 27/10/86) and I told him about the disks.

'How many?'

'Thirteen,' I replied,

'Bloody hell . . . excuse me,' he retorted with surprise.

He then went on to say that although the guarantee had expired, he would honour it.

A week or so later, 13 disks (not 26) arrived with a scribbled note stating that their 'double replacement refers to HI-GRADE labelled disks' and not mine.

Oh yes?! I'll bet my shirt the leaflet didn't specify the type of disks, and anyway it claimed ALL disks had lifetime warranties. Richard Mortimer had stated that he would PERSONALLY see to it that they were replaced two-fold (contradicted by what I received), and the 'personal' reply from a Mrs Swift (?) was not legible.

In short, I shan't be trading with DDS UK again.
Scott Murray, Basingstoke, Hampshire

Something here is a bit odd. The argument as to whether yours were HI-GRADE disks or not and whether that entitled you to a double replacement, is something I can't comment on without seeing the leaflet in question. Mr Mortimer, however, is on dodgy ground indeed, if he really is claiming that any form of warranty attached to a sold product is only in force whilst a form of offer is running, and that that warranty can be removed when he feels like it.
LM

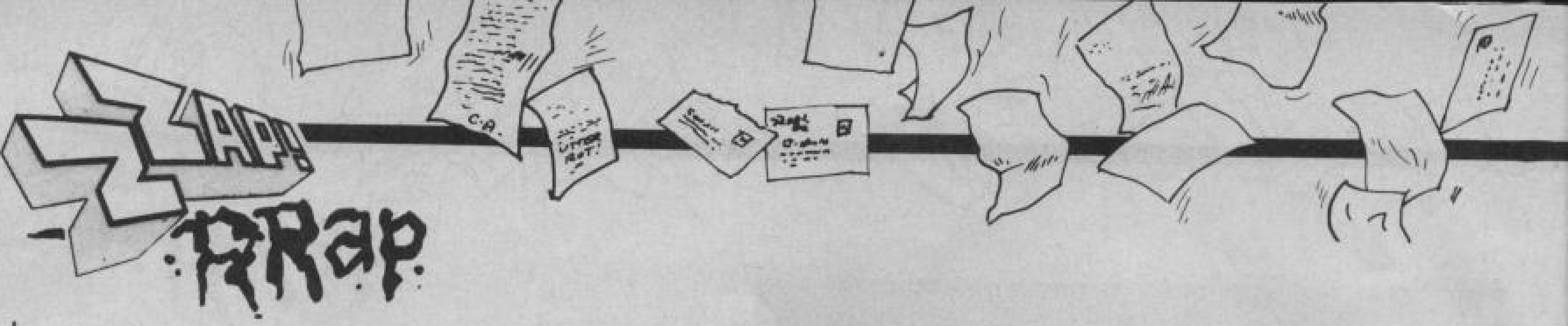
A BIG SPENDER

Dear ZZAP!
I am the proud owner of 100 copies of the November issue of ZZAP! 64, and the reason? I had a whole page to myself (page 72 to be exact).

So I gave 50 copies away to my friends at college, stuck the page up on the noticeboard, even had it framed and placed in full glory, for all to see, on my bedroom wall. And what did I get for it, NOTHING (as yet)! I thought I might have been entitled to a T-Shirt or perhaps even a game.

Do you give prizes away for tips printed? How's about having a STAR TIP or POKE or CHEAT, like you have a STAR LETTER in ZZAP! Rrap. Anyway I have go to go, my framed page needs dusting.
Julian Smith, Sheffield

Gary is having a deep think about your 'Tip Of The Month' suggestion. As to buying all those copies of ZZAP! – well thanks, but should we suffer your vanity to that degree!? Tell you what, I'll deal with you the way we're treated by the newstrade – you send in the 100 covers as proof of purchase, and I'll send you a sweatshirt, and a cap and a game. How's that? (By the way, for that many copies, you could have applied direct and received a hefty discount)!
LM



GARY THE GROUSE

Dear ZZAP!
I've just been to the 9th Commodore Show and there's one or two things I'd like to say.

Firstly the show was very impressive well done everyone.

Secondly the ZZAP! stand, was a let down. Okay, 9 out of 10 for looks but zilch for friendliness. Might I say that Gary Penn is a living zombie who chews his tongue most of the time.

'Wow, the real Gary,' I thought when I spotted him first. 'Hi Gary' I said. The reply – nothing. Gary just watched the TV screen, typed a few things, smoked and chewed his tongue.

If the rest of you are like this in public then God help us, but I'm sure that this was just the one off thing.

Oh Gary is a busy person, but if he was at the show at least he could have said something, and given out the odd poster here and there. Come on ZZAP! you're a very good mag don't let us down in public. Keep up the good work. I hope to see better things at the next show.

Derek Tweedie, Southsea, Hants

No, NO, Gary. You can't reply in that manner. It's simply not polite! Right. That's better. Calm down. Derek, Gary says (I'm translating here, you understand) that actually he was nibbling the inside of his mouth. He also adds that you must have been there on the Sunday, and he was very tired from being so jolly on Friday and Saturday. Besides, Gary Liddon reckoned he was 'well the jolly fellow on Sunday' (mainly because so many software houses bought him so many drinks).

The rest I'll have to delete because it would just get me into trouble!

He really can be nice some days, Derek, honest.

LM

PEN PALS PLEASE

Dear ZZAP!
How come you don't have a pen pal page. I think this would be a great idea. I think getting rid of Mangram was a great idea but who will replace him. If any one out there would like to be my pen pal here's my address:
101 Glenarm Road, Clapton, London E5 0NA

Unfortunately this person forgot to include his/her name, but the next writer remembered . . .

LM

To Lloyd,
I really would like a pen pal. I don't want anyone to swap games with, just someone to write to. Seeing as this mag ends up all over the world I thought that if you print this letter someone may reply to me.

I am 17 years old and male. I would like a male or female pen pal of about the same age preferably from another country.

Yasin Ghani, 56 Bowyer Road, Alum Rock, Birmingham B8 1ET

There you go, Yasin. Any takers from anywhere in the great wide ZZAP! World?

LM

CONFUSED – THEN READ ON





Dear Lloyd,
Brill magazine, keep it up, except one minor detail – your ZZAP! Tests.

Commodore User (November issue) had a review of *Marble Madness*. The screen shots looked amazing. On reading through this review it even sounded pretty wonderful; I quote: 'Graphics are as good as I've seen on the 64 and the scrolling is up to *Uridium* standards'. (I have *Uridium* and the scrolling is the best I have ever seen). In the very last paragraph on *Marble Madness* it says, 'There's no excuse you must buy it'. So I took their advice and sent away for it. The ratings they gave it were: Graphics 10; Sound 7; Toughness 9; Endurance 9; Value 9 and with an Overall of 9.

A few days later ZZAP! 64 entered my shop. Flicking through it in the comfort of my own home, I came across *Marble Madness* in ZZAP! Test. With those funny cartoon characters making horrible faces, my first thoughts were, 'Oh no, they think it's crap.' I was thoroughly disappointed to see that ZZAP!'s rating was the complete opposite to that of **CU**: Graphics 70; Sound 39%; Value 33%; Hookability 76%; Lastability 38% and an overall of 40%.

There was a big thud as my chin hit the ground. I thought to myself, it's illogical – one mag says the best, buy it, and another says quick bury it we don't want to know.

Another game is *Fist II*; **CU** greeted it with: Graphics 8; Sound 7; Toughness 9; Endurance 10; Value 8 and an Overall of 8 but ZZAP! reads the complete opposite with an Overall of 39% (near 4 out of 10), but I agree with ZZAP! on this one.

There's a problem for us readers who play piggy in the middle and don't know whether to buy a game which one mag rates extremely high and another very low.

Thank you, here I rest my case, are you guilty or not guilty?

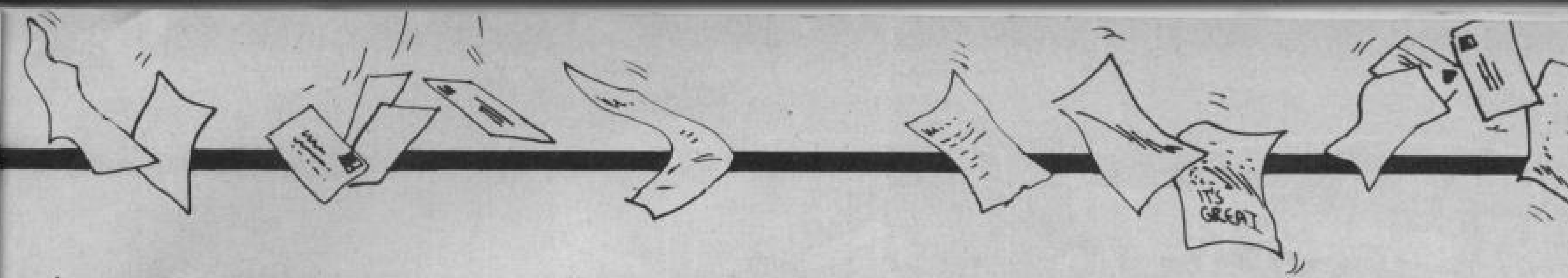
Anthony A, Worthing, Sussex

Unfortunately you don't tell me which review of Marble Madness *you felt to be the most accurate in your opinion when you got the game.*

If everyone agreed with each other over, well – just about everything, then there would hardly be any point reviewing or criticising any product. Clearly, a reviewer offers a personal opinion. Writing for a magazine means that the opinion tries to take into account commercial values as well as purely aesthetic ones, but at the end of the day it's still an individual's thoughts and may be disagreed with. On ZZAP! we use three people to offer these opinions and correlate their respective and differing ratings into averages that, hopefully, are more reflective of the mass view than just a single reviewer's. (For instance, Julian was so at variance with three other people over The Sentinel *that his view was also added to the review in fairness).*

Since you quote Commodore User *in your examples, may I refer (most respectfully of course) to Eugene's reply to the letter DIFFERING OPINIONS on page 7,* CU *December issue. The game in question was Arcana (Graphics 9 in CU, 55% in ZZAP!). Eugene said; 'I wouldn't have given* Arcana *9 for graphics, but there again I wouldn't have given it the equivalent of 5. Trust us.'*

Strange, when you think of it. One moment the editor is telling the reader that he disagrees with his reviewer, and then asks for the reader's trust in their collective opinion.



PROUD PIRATE

Dear Lloyd,
I am almost 14 and I have over 30 pirated tapes. I challenge the words of John Trott's letter in a number of ways:

Compilations: In his letter Mr Trott says customers get extremely annoyed when full priced games appear on compilations in a matter of weeks after their release on singles. I think not. In my opinion it is the retailer (of which Mr Trott is one of many) who gets worked up when the wary customer waits a while before purchasing a game full price because he knows it may soon appear on a compilation.

I was tempted to buy *Commando* by Elite, but I waited and my patience has been rewarded, for now, to my delight, I have learned that I will get four Elite titles for the price of one. The same happened with *Turbo Esprit* by Durell and *Rambo* by Ocean, and now I have been rewarded, as have many customers.

Piracy: The figures Mr Trott has invented for the illegal circulation of a game are utter nonsense. I simply copy a friend's games for myself, and my games for him. Then I invite another friend round, show him my collection of 60 odd computer games and say 'Take your pick'. I repeat this with a figure nowhere near the ten Mr Trott seems to believe exists. Before you know it, everyone has a decent selections of games, not a thousand, more like four.

Us schoolkids need to save money and cut corners in this way, because most of us are under 16 and so cannot work for more than two hours each day for slave wages. Mr Trott, as you are employed with a steady salary working in a computer shop, you can afford to buy a £10-15 game often – possibly even at distributors' prices. Us schoolkids like to play games too y'know – but as you, Mr Trott, are so worried about your profit margin, it's unlikely you'll think of anything else.

Consider yourself sussed and bolted.
Dennis the Menace, Dennis' House, Beanoland

Yes, very witty, Dennis the Menace. Consider yourself sussed too, and your very own words have bolted you – right to the floor where you belong.

LM

HOME IMPROVEMENTS

Dear ZZAP!
On the whole I think ZZAP! is a very enjoyable magazine to read but I think it could be improved in quite a few simple ways.

To start with, I think 'speciality' areas such as ZZAP! strategy and The Chronicles of the white wizard are not reviewed in a correct way. These sections are only reviewed by ONE person and are only an individualist opinion whereas the arcade games section relies upon the 'average' personal opinions of (usually) THREE reviewers. This means that if the Wizard does not like a game the adventure will score a low percentage but if one of the arcade reviewers dislikes a game yet the other reviewers like the game it can still receive a high rating, eg: *AlleyKat* received 89% even though Gary Penn hated the game.

Secondly, presentation. Having read issue 20. you have made improvements by highlighting the overall figure and giving more room to Sizzlers with larger pic-

▶



tures and increased speech bubble size. but certain areas (such as the adventure column) have remained unchanged.

Many people are interested in getting a disk drive, printer or mouse, so why not cater for them by doing reviews of such items. I realise the manufacturer has to send them to you for review, so why don't they do so? To the manufacturer their product gains cheap advertising and, if the Product receives an average to good review, their sales will also increase making it even more worthwhile for them to send their products to ZZAP!

Many of the competitions rely upon a special talent, such as artistic skill, in order to win. Surely it would be better for the sponsors of competitions if you induced as many people to enter competitions as possible (for one thing this would make more people look at the sponsors' products, and therefore sales could be increased).

Richard Leeves, Basingstoke, Hampshire

Some news for you, Richard; Ol' Whitey wants to have more comments in the adventure reviews, and it's being looked into. Those areas of ZZAP! that haven't as yet received a face-lift, will be getting the treatment over the next few issues. As to hardware, there has always been some resistance from readers, and the questionnaires have shown that, oddly, it's an unpopular area. Besides, with Liddon off in London, no-one on ZZAP! is really qualified to deal with peripherals. Arty competitions? Well it's the ideas rather than the execution which really counts when it comes to picking them.

LM

A BIT OF A BIND

Dear Lloyd,
When I first got your mag I could see it was worth it because of the amount of pages full of competitions, reviews, highscore, hints and tips and lots, lots more, but as your issues got bigger and bigger, the staples you put in couldn't hold the pages together. However, a bit of sellotape did the job alright, but in the recent 180 page ZZAP! the strain was too much on the staples. So I did the usual, fixed it with a bit of sellotape, placing it over the middle page staples so the centre wouldn't fall out. But every time I turned a page, that page came out, so I sellotaped it, but it went on and on until my ZZAP! looked a wreck. I'm too scared to touch it in case another page comes out.

Please could you do something about it like using bigger and stronger staples or not use staples at all – use a binder (a cheap strong one), or stick it together with glue.

Jamie Ford, Southampton

There's no such thing as a cheap binder such as you suggest, Jamie. I'm afraid you'll have to stick with the sticky tape method. Stronger staples would be a part-answer, but they tend to pull through the paper even more quickly when an issue gets very big. Of course, we could glue the spine – perfect binding it's called – but that would prevent people who have purchased ZZAP! Binders from using them, which seems a bit unfair.

LM

STANDING SILENT DUTY

Dear ZZAP!
What follows is an account of my response to the game *The Sentinel*!

Thursday 13th November:
I finally reached home with my copy of ZZAP! and quickly browsed through the many entertaining pages until finally stumbling across a Gold Medal award which was titled *The Sentinel*; I read the comments then moved on to more excellent pages . . . WAIT A MINUTE! THAT GAME SOUNDS A BLOODY WHOPPER! I read every word on pages 22, 23 and 24 and thought. This game is going to grab me, I assured myself.

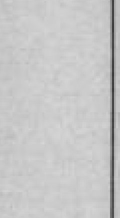
Saturday 15th November
Purchased *The Sentinel*, caught a bus home. Loaded up the game, I played it – in fact I've never played a game so much since I first explored the depths of *Mercenary*.

Thanks for such a great mag and could I thank Paul Sumner for a word perfect comment.

Andrew Shields, Norris Green, Liverpool

I'm sure Paul Sumner would like to thank you for your kind sentiments. He's quite a wizz with the words, ol' Paul, isn't he? And no, you can't have another pay rise – I'm next in line.

LM



A GREAT DANE WRITES . .

Dear Lloyd,
Before I start you must realise that I'm a Dane and therefore this letter probably contains some grammatical faults, even though I hope you will be able to understand it.

FORGOTTEN NEWSFLASH:

If you take an older issue of ZZAP! and look through the Newsflash pages, you'll see that some of the mentioned games have never been reviewed in ZZAP! For instance: *Fast Tracks, Pole Position II*, and *Future Ball*. I think it's about time you told us what happened with those. and all the other 'forgotten' games.

I would be very happy if every second month or so you would print some information about those games about which we haven't heard anything new for six or seven months. For instance, if you haven't received a copy, but the game has been released for over half an year ago (as with *The Young Ones*), then tell us, so we don't have to wait for a review, which never will appear.

OLDIES:

Do the games *Impossible Mission, Wizard of Wor* and *Ghostbusters* mean anything to you? Of course they do, all of them are old and famous, you could actually call them PAST BLASTERS, but it seems like you have forgotten these two words.

When I bought my first issue of ZZAP! (issue 5), I was very happy to find a section called Past Blaster. The reason for this was that I didn't and still don't know all the good old games.

How can you close down such an added bonus for the magazine? What a pity.

SPLIT REVIEWS:

In your second ZZAP!tionnaire, you did get a lot of information about how we (the readers) thought ZZAP! could be improved. One of the results was that we would like to have more pictures, I agreed with this and thought it would be great with extra pictures. Now I don't, and you're probably asking why. Look through the reviews of *Supercycle, International Karate, Ghosts 'n' Goblins* and finally *World Games*, and you have the explanation – nearly no words, but a lot of pictures. Okay, I must admit, it can be very hard to write much about a beat em up and a race game, but you have done it before, so why not do it again.

PRODUCERS:

In all your reviews you have told us the name of the producers, oh . . . sorry, not in all of them, a lot of your reviews have only given us the name of who has made the distribution of the game, and now I'm asking you why? It took me over a year to find out that *Scarabaeus* was produced by Andromeda, actually it took me over a year to find out that there was a software house called Andromeda.

And to this very day I still don't know who has made *The Kaiser, Saucer Attack, Bounces, Sentinel* and others. (*Sentinel* and all the other games from Americana are just old games which have been programmed by others, and it isn't the same as Past Blaster, some of them have never been popular). If you don't know who has programmed a particular game, I don't think it can be that hard to call up for instance: Ariolasoft, US Gold or Beyond and ask for, which software house actually produced the game. If you did so, it would be very easy to find out which software house we could be expecting some hot games from.

Otherwise I think your magazine is great.

Rene B Pedersen, Hillerod, Denmark

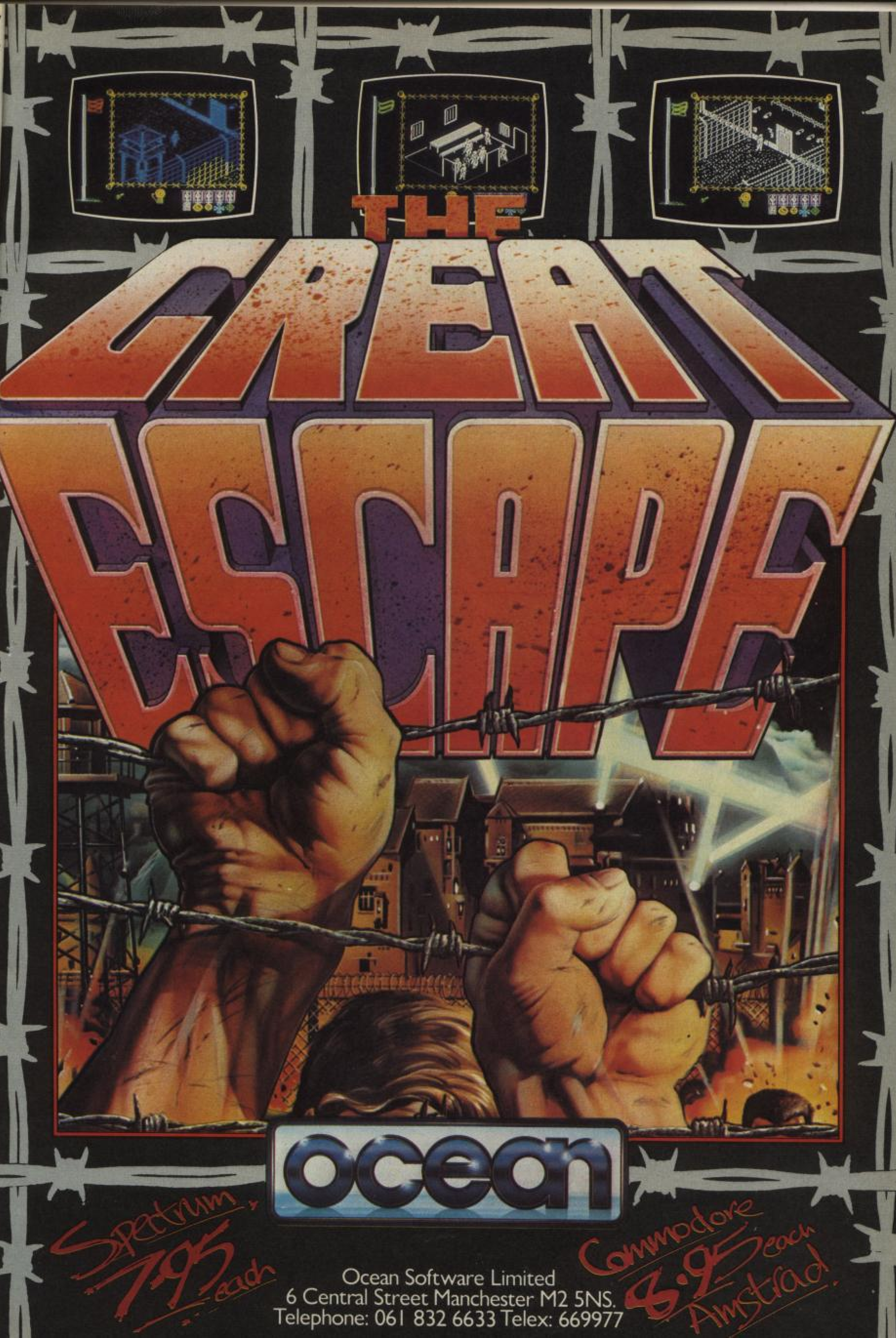
Right! As far as I know, it doesn't look like Fast Tracks *will ever be released in this country.* Pole Position II *– Lord only knows what happened to that. I think* Futureball *still could be released.* The Young Ones *. . . we weren't sent a review copy – in fact we still haven't got one.*

We may well be featuring more Past Blasters. It's all a matter of time – how much (or in our case, how little) is available. And we don't want to dedicate too much time to old games when there are so many pieces of new software to write about, now do we . . . ?

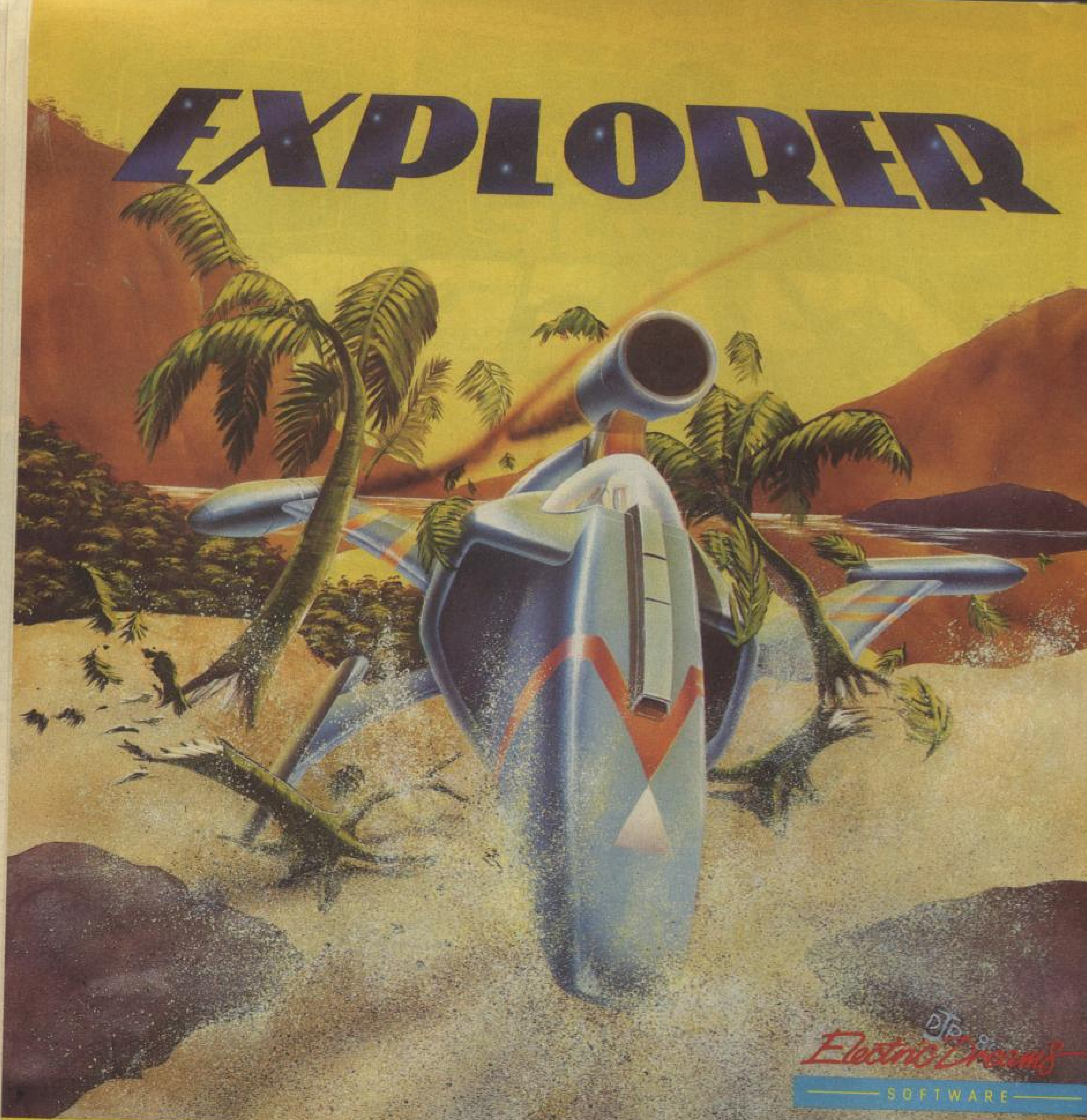
More pictures means less text, otherwise we'd end up with a majority of games getting two or more pages of coverage – not worth it, really. Less room for Past Blasters and the like . . .

Within a review, it's often said who actually programmed a game, when we know, but generally, I don't reckon it's worth informing readers that so-and-so programmed such-and-such a game. This is first time I've seen such a request.

LM



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MULTIPLE GROANS

Dear ZZAP! 64
I'm putting pen to paper to say that I am absolutely sick and bloody tired of people writing to you about multiple loading games. Many people in the last few months have written to you saying how tiresome and boring multiple loaders such as *Summer Games II*, *Winter Games* and the like are and why do they take so long to load.

People have also wrote in to ask why US Gold cannot make the loading time less, or obliterate multiple loading altogether.

Well, I have just one answer for that lot, if you moan about it so much, then why do you bloomin' well buy the game in the first place? When ZZAP! review US Gold games on disk, they always state that on cassette it will be multiload. Don't these people read the points?

Most people in the United States have disk drives anyway, so imagine how hard it is to transfer a complex disk game to the trusty old British cassette. I, myself, have *Summer Games II*, *Winter Games*, *Super Cycle* and *Beach Head II*, all of these multiple loaders. I don't like multiple loaders, but there's nothing I can do about it and I suggest that people stop moaning about the games and start enjoying them.
David Washer, Wembley, Middlesex

Too right, David! It might be an irritation to miss out on a great game, but as punters, we all have the right not to buy games with multiload if they're such a 'bore'.
LM



NOT ENOUGH EFFORT

Dear Lloyd,
After reading your magazine from the October 1986 issue, I decided to subscribe as I thought ZZAP! was fabbo. I still do, but your Christmas Special is rather pathetic compared to your regular issues.

For nearly twice the price, we got less reviews, less tips and overall a worse magazine. Gary Penn did explain this in his editorial, but surely something could have been done. I was looking forward to a special ZZAPBACK to see what past games would get now, but there wasn't one. Very annoying.

I still think your magazine is the best, and I will support it by renewing my subscription every year, but I do wish that you had put more thought and effort into your Christmas Special as you do into your other issues.
Matthew Thomas, Wellingborough, Northants

It's a sad truth that because the Christmas period telescopes everything, there were only two weeks between finishing the December issue and the Christmas one. Nevertheless, a hell of a lot of hard work went into it, especially as every piece of software we could get our hands on was reviewed – and that wasn't much – so space allocated to reviews had to be filled in other ways. The next writer doesn't quite share your opinions . . .
LM

Dear Lloyd
Upon receiving the ZZAP! Christmas Special I immediately ripped off the plastic cover with even more anticipation than usual. Pausing only briefly to pay my respects to poor old D Priest (he might've at least spiked his hair and removed his glasses for the occasion) I read the magazine from cover to cover. PHEW!

Now here comes the surprising bit, I was DISAPPOINTED, yes, it would appear that the open mouths on the cover are not singing the praises of the Almighty ZZAP! 64 (plus **LM**) but are, in truth, yawning. Why? Because compared to the delight I expected from this 'Special' issue it was complete boredom! Reason?

20 reviews! This may not mean too much to the casual ZZAP! reader, but to a collector it means the fewest reviews ever printed in any ZZAP! mag (except issue 18).

Basically ZZAP! is a reviewing magazine and yet (out of 194 pages) it can only manage 26 pages of reviews in its Christmas Special

Before you tell me and the viewing millions that you can only review the games that happen to be released at that time, I'll let you know that this MEGAGRIPE is also aimed at the software houses – it's Christmas and you've only released 20 games worth reviewing (and only one worth a Sizzler)! Gripe completed.

Keeping to the tradition of Rrap letters, I must now give you a well earned pat on the back, even after my 'megagripe': Congratulations ZZAP! nevertheless, you still managed to make a magazine infinitely better than the best of the rest from start to finish.

Keep up the good work and keep writing *Tamara Knight* (it's brill).
Cameron Lowe, Glasgow, Scotland

The Software Houses aren't entirely to blame. Our deadlines didn't help, but then they were only a week earlier than usual. We've since received over SIXTY games for review, and as I write, it's planned that there will be FIFTY pages of reviews. We haven't had time to review any more games than we have done.
LM

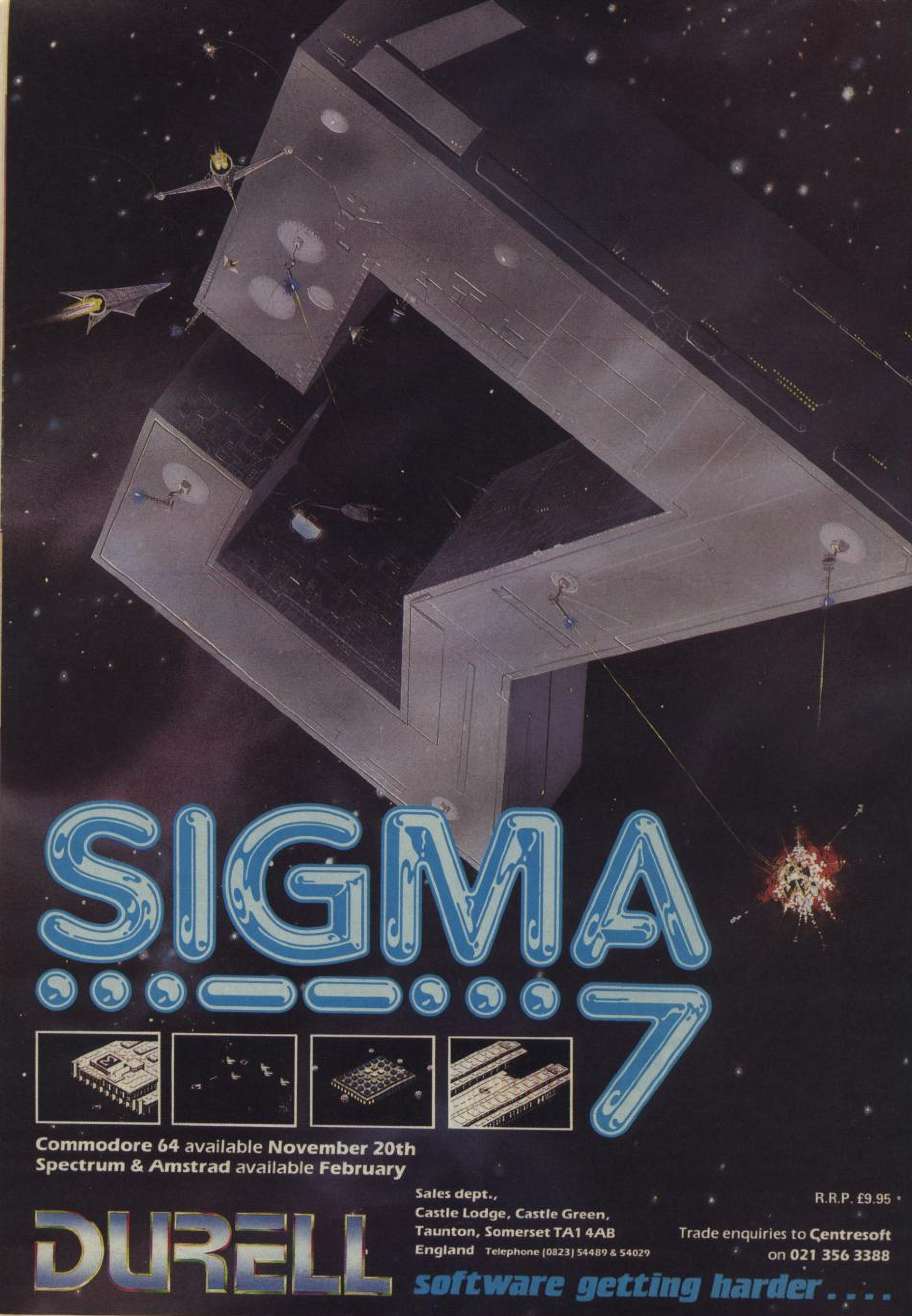
If you've anything to say about Commodore games, Commodore machines, Commodore, or simply common doors of perception, existentialism, incomprehensible art critics, the Quark Quark Quantum Theory, post-natal clinics, sperm banks, cloud banks or Gnat West, just write to: LLOYD MANGRAM, ZZAP! RRAP, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB. I may not be able to answer all of your teeming letters, but it does give me a chance to take a dig at Eugene now and then – and that can't be bad for competition.

JUST FED UP

Dear Lloyd,
I'd just like to bring into view the attitude of Ariolasoft to complaints.

I have written to Ariolasoft three times about a faulty copy of *Racing Destruction Set* and as yet I have had no reply. I know they're busy and all that guff but I'm totally fed up with them. I don't think I'll buy another Ariolasoft game again unless it's on disk, because then I probably wouldn't have loading problems.
Steven McLean, Alyth, Perthshire

No reply, Ariolasoft? Tut Tut. However, Steven, you don't say that you've actually returned the tape to them. If you do that, it might help.
LM


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ZZAP! TEST

GAUNTLET

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Trapped in a world of hundreds of dungeons are our four valiant heroes: Merlin the Wizard, Questor the Elf, Thyra the Valkyrie and Thor the Warrior. They can't escape from this realm of mazes and can only move from dungeon to dungeon, staying alive by scavenging food, potions and magic charms whenever the opportunity arises.

Either one or two players can play, each taking the role of their favourite of the four characters. A dungeon is roughly two by two screens in area and it scrolls as the player(s) explore. Neither player can leave the screen without the other following, consequently the two have to work together if they are to move around the dungeon successfully.

The intrepid adventurers aren't alone in this world of rock and stone. They are kept company by hordes of beastly creatures who don't like intruders. Consequently anything they consider to be remotely alien to their environment is leapt upon and attacked with much gusto and relish. There are six breeds of marauding meanies: suicidal ghosts; baton-wielding grunts; fire-spitting demons; rock-throwing lobbers, disappearing sorcerers and finally, the most fearsome of opponents – Death, these horrors try to home in on whose touch spells doom. All of your character, attempting to engage them in hand-to-hand combat. This fighting diminishes your character's health energy, as shown numerically at the bottom of the screen. If this energy is allowed to reach zero the character dies, however this can be prevented by eating the food which is scattered around the dungeons in limited amounts (careful though, some of this food is poisoned and only serves to make your character weaker).

Hand-to-hand combat isn't the only way of fighting: each character has the ability to destroy the baddies by use of their personal weapons (these weapons also destroy the generator buildings which produce the vile creatures). This method of destruction is very effective, and it ensures a much longer adventure.

Magic potions can also occasionally be found and picked up, when used they have a 'smart-bomb' effect, and every denizen on screen is damaged or killed (the potion's effectiveness depends upon which character uses it). Some potions also yield special powers to the user, such as extra armour, fire power or pick-up ability.



Thyra and Merlin wonder where to wander next – it seems there's trouble around every corner



Once again Thyra and Merlin are the centre of attention. Is there no rest for the wicked?





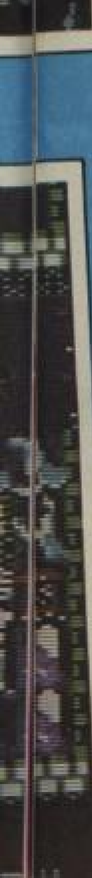


Unbelievable! All the features of the arcade game (including the original maze plans!) have been packed into this incredible conversion. What really is stunning though, is the amount of action generated – you can have loads and loads of horrible denizens chasing after you! I've never seen so many things chasing a main character, due to this the action gets pretty frenetic. I must confess that I like playing the game on my own, the multi-player option doesn't appeal as much – taking on the hordes of characters singlehanded is great fun and the action is non-stop. The graphics are really great, although the sound could have been a lot better. The disk version is neat as it accesses the levels in a random manner. The cassette version is on a multi-load format and consequently the dungeons are in a set order, but this doesn't detract from the action in any way and the loading system isn't a chore to use. This is a truly brilliant program and shouldn't be missed at any cost.

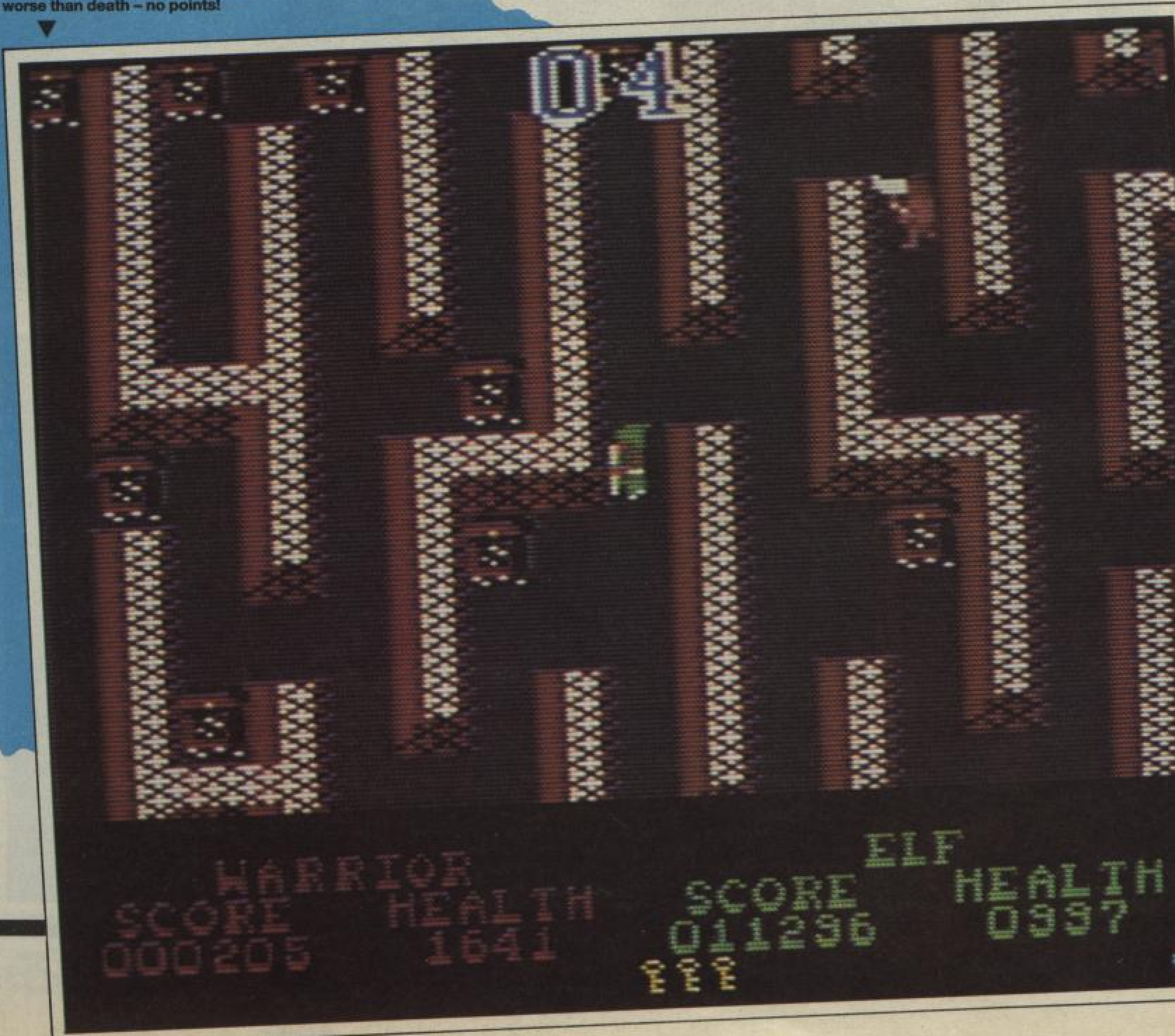
Having never encountered Gauntlet in the arcades, I didn't really know what to expect from this conversion. To begin with it all looked a bit bland, with little more in the way of sound than the occasional jingle that plays when progressing from level to level. However Gauntlet's attraction is due mainly to its simplicity, and for that reason it's very playable. This simplicity means that anyone can enjoy it to a certain extent, whether proficient at the arcade game or not. However, I think playing it continually with only one player may eventually become slightly tedious but, having said that, it's infinitely more fun with someone else playing alongside you. I don't think I'm as awestruck as I was expecting to be, but it'll keep me happy – for the time being.



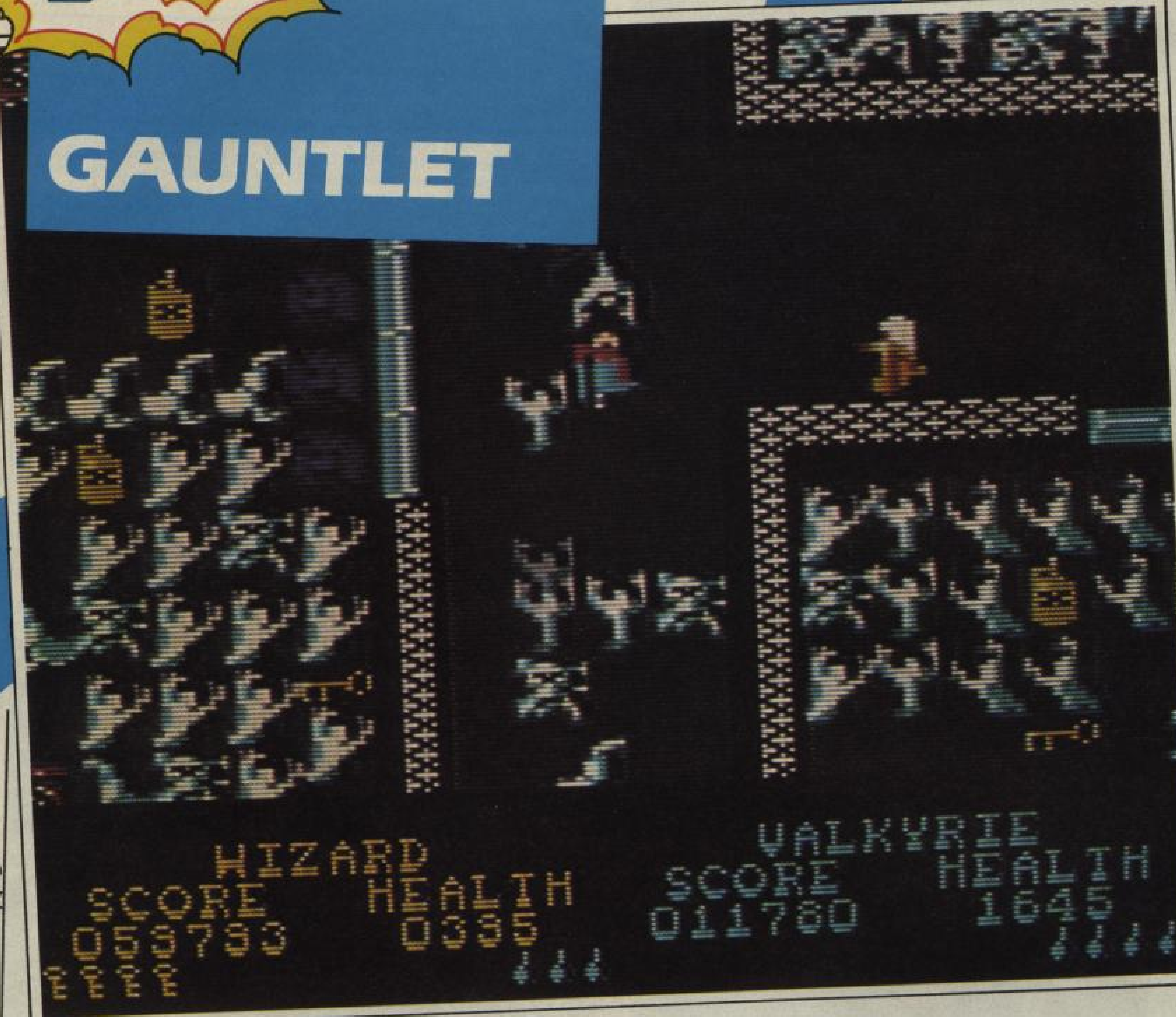




Gosh! Elf and Warrior have found a hidden treasure room. But they've only got four seconds to escape with the loot, otherwise . . . A fate worse than death – no points!

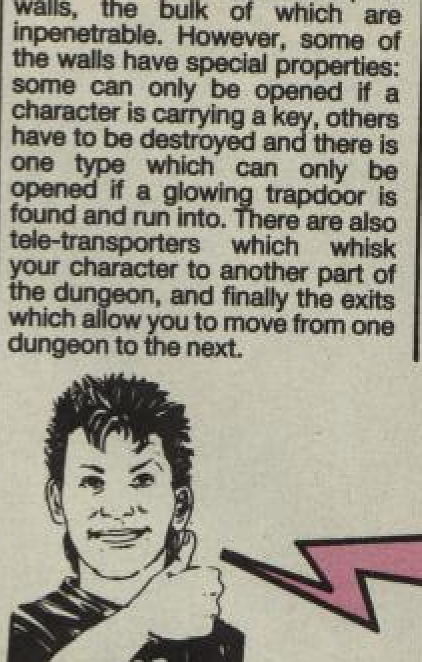


GAUNTLET



▲ There's a series of traps behind that locked door, but who knows what would happen if they were activated?

▷ Each dungeon is made up of walls, the bulk of which are inpenetrable. However, some of the walls have special properties: some can only be opened if a character is carrying a key, others have to be destroyed and there is one type which can only be opened if a glowing trapdoor is found and run into. There are also tele-transporters which whisk your character to another part of the dungeon, and finally the exits which allow you to move from one dungeon to the next.



Gauntlet is without doubt the classic arcade game. Its popularity is due to the fact that it's essentially a simple game which anyone can get straight into, and, more importantly, it is something of a social event: the opportunity for a group of friends to have fun living out a fantasy together. Money becomes a form of lifeforce, and since it is more expendable than blood it flows freely into the arcade machine, somehow generating a sense of 'being there'. This is where the computer conversion stumbles: gone is the incentive to do well because no money is being lost. However, the social atmosphere hasn't been lost entirely during the process of conversion. The programmers have captured some of the feel of the arcade original and have produced a highly absorbing two player game – Gauntlet isn't much fun on your own. The graphics aren't exceptional, but they are convincing enough, especially when hundreds of nasties spew forth and fill the screen. Sound could have been put to better use though, as the spot FX are poor. There's no speech, but then, I wasn't expecting any . . . Gauntlet isn't quite as good a conversion as it should have been, which is understandable in the graphics and sound department, but not where gameplay is concerned: for some reason players can't push each other around, something which adds to the fun of the arcade original – especially on the screen which is full of exits. Apart from a few bugs – the most irritating of which is when a player sometimes 'wraps' round the screen, this does tend to screw up the proceedings somewhat – Gauntlet is a competent and playable conversion which will appeal to fans of the arcade original.

PRESENTATION 82%
Copious instructions, one or two player option, and an adequate loading system.

GRAPHICS 90%
The different characters are all adequately defined and animated for their size, and the amount of things moving on screen is very impressive.

SOUND 31%
Simple jingles and poor spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 95%
Immediately playable and compulsive.

LASTABILITY 92%
512 levels to explore, but the going can get a little tedious.

VALUE 90%
A worthy purchase for *Gauntlet* junkies.

OVERALL 93%
A first rate conversion of a first rate arcade game.

HIGHLANDER

Ocean, £8.95 cass, joystick only



McLeod and Ramirez face each other, ready to do battle

It's a kind of magic. Immortals are not just the stuff of legend, they actually exist and roam the Earth engaged in a never-ending battle to decide who will be 'The One'. The immortal who succeeds in this titanic struggle will become the holder of 'the knowledge', and either the saviour or the destroyer of the world.

In *Highlander*, you take the part of the immortal McLeod; born originally into an ancient Scottish clan, and now a respected art dealer in New York. In order to save the world, McLeod must do battle with three remaining immortals and kill them in the only way possible – by removing their heads. Remember 'there can be only one'.

Highlander is a sword fighting game which can be played in two ways: either against a series of increasingly nasty computer opponents, or as a two player head-to-head. The action takes place over three different, separately loaded scenarios. In the first stage you face Ramirez, the least skilled of your three opponents. This stage can be used to gain experience and develop skills in attack, defence and swordplay.

There are fourteen different moves at your disposal, all accessed via combinations of joystick directions and presses of the fire button. McLeod can be moved left and right across the screen and made to kneel by pulling down on the joystick. A forward push lifts him off the floor and back into a standing position.

While standing, McLeod has two defensive moves (allowing him to defend his head and body), and six for attack. Each move is executed by keeping the fire button pressed and moving the joystick in the appropriate direction. In the kneeling position there are three attacking moves, and three defensive moves which allow McLeod to defend his neck, head and feet.

McLeod's energy status is displayed at the bottom of the screen in the form of a bar which shrinks to a fatal zero as hits are sustained or when an attack is unsuccessful. The energy slowly recharges itself, so if the bar is a bit on the low side, McLeod can back off from the fray and wait until his strength returns.

The second opponent is Fizir, an ancient and skillful fighter who is vicious with his swordplay and completely merciless. In the third stage, set high on the rooftops above the city streets, you battle the mighty Kurgen, supreme swordsman and a deadly enemy. Beat him, and you become the keeper of the knowledge. Fail, and the world is damned.



I'm not impressed in the slightest with this feeble offering. Weak graphics with unresponsive gameplay. Yeuch! This is a real case of a film tie-in rip-off. There is no real scenario provided, and McLeod even ends up fighting a couple of characters who were his best friends in the film! This is simply a tacky fencing game with the name Highlander **tagged on, almost as an afterthought. I mean, this could just as easily have been called 'Robin Hood' or even 'Star Wars' with only a few minor changes in the graphics. No atmosphere and no inspiration leads to a dull and repetitive game. Give it a miss.**



There's nothing vaguely original or interesting about this game. It's a slow and incredibly banal beat 'em up which seems to have very little to do with the film of the same name. The characters are well drawn, but move slowly and hobble across the screen in a most amusing manner. A reasonable rendition of 'It's a Kind of Magic' plays during the game, and the spot FX are rather good. Otherwise, Highlander **is drab. I dare say some people will enjoy the limited challenge, but there's no way I would fork out the nine quid asking price for such a slow and boring game.**



I don't think much of this bland one-on-one fighting game at all – there's just not enough in it to keep you interested for more than a couple of games. The gameplay is slow and the characters are sluggish to respond to joystick manipulation. The graphics are very poor – the main sprites are extremely blocky, and the backdrops are dull and lack any interesting features. If you're after a fighting game then look elsewhere – there are many others on the market which offer a lot more in the way of excitement and challenge.

'And I dub you Sir . . . ' Impressed by Ramirez' superior swordplay, McLeod kneels to show his respect



PRESENTATION 79%
One or two player option and good use of joystick. Annoying and seemingly unnecessary multi-load system though.

GRAPHICS 46%
Extremely slow moving, blocky sprites and bland backdrops.

SOUND 70%
A reasonable version of Queen's 'It's a kind of Magic', and functional spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 45%
Mildly interesting at first, although the joystick controls are tricky to get used to.

LASTABILITY 27%
Too slow and tedious to captivate.

VALUE 23%
A high price to pay for such a dull and unoriginal product.

OVERALL 30%
A poor fighting program hiding behind an official licence.



ZZAP! TEST

STARGLIDER

Rainbird, £14.95 cass, £17.95 disk, joystick with keys

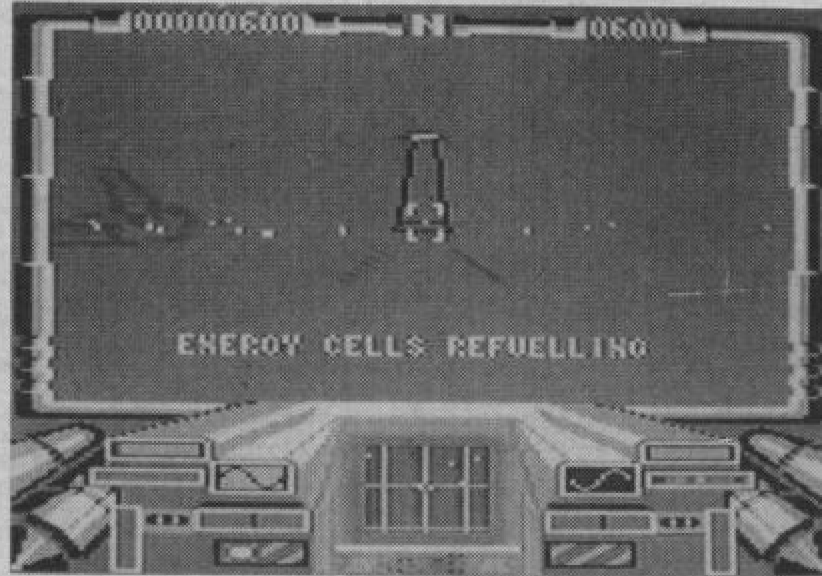
Novenia was once a peaceful and prosperous world; now it's an obscene battle-scarred waste, under attack by a race of evil beings known as the Egrons. Novenian resistance is negligible, and the Egrons will soon control the planet.

Enter Jaysan and Katra, two brave souls determined to eradicate the Egron threat. The fate of Novenia lies entirely in their hands and their only hope is an ancient fighter – an Airborne Ground Attack Vehicle (AGAV). Fast. Manoeuvrable. Armed with twin lasers and one missile. Protected by an inferior shielding device.

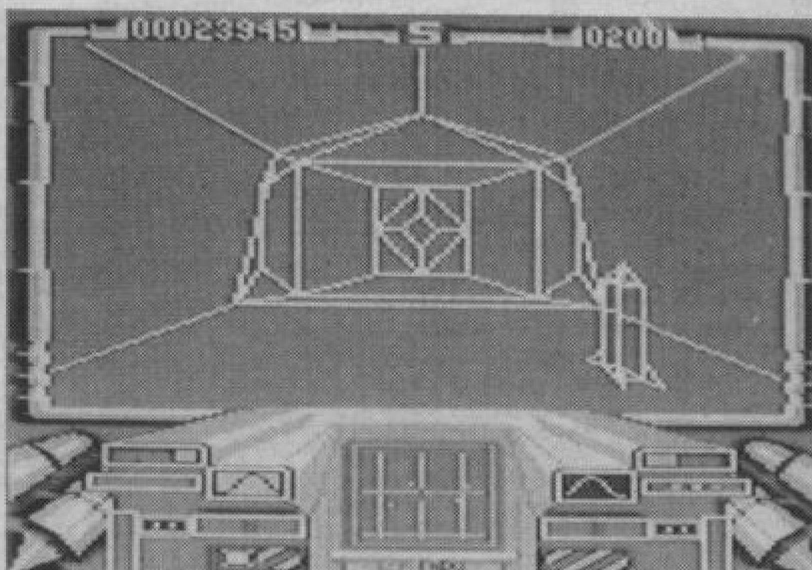
Novenia's surface is divided into a grid, 100 units by 100 units. The view from the AGAV's cockpit is presented using vector graphics, and the viewscreen is surrounded by instrumentation. Horizontal and vertical status bars show the AGAV's energy, speed, height, shield strength, and laser power. A scanner in the centre of the control panel acts as a radar, showing activity around the AGAV. Below this, the ship's co-ordinates are given in numeric form. A set of sights is constantly displayed in the centre of the screen, and is



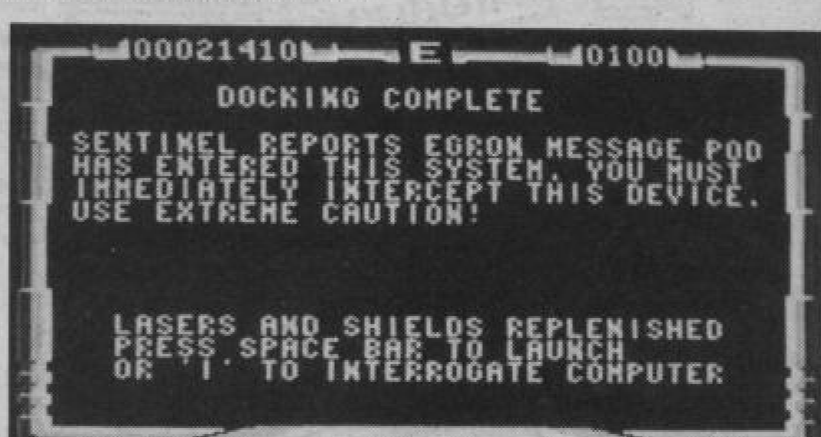
After thoroughly reading through the mildly interesting novella and lengthy instructions, I sat down to play what I thought was going to be something very special indeed. However it didn't take long to discover that Starglider is little more than a 'pretentious' 3D shoot 'em up, trying to be something it isn't. 'Cosmetically' Starglider is competent enough. The title screen tune is pleasant, but unfortunately the spot FX are weak. The vector graphics are rather jerky, but once you get absorbed in the proceedings then everything works well enough. However, the effect of flying is poor and detrimental to any atmosphere generated. To be fair, there's nothing like Starglider on the 64. I suppose the nearest I've seen to a game of this type is Stellar Seven and Articfox, both of which are Battlezone clones. Mercenary is also similar, but it is more of an arcade adventure than a 3D shoot 'em up, so speed isn't overly important. However in Starglider speed is virtually everything, as there is little in the way of captivating gameplay. It's all very well producing a game with fast vector graphics – as far as the 64 is concerned. But in Starglider's case there's not much of a game to back up any technical achievement. I'm impressed by the effort but not the end result. I suggest you take a good look at Starglider and think carefully before you part with fifteen quid. That's a high expenditure for some slick packaging and a mediocre game.



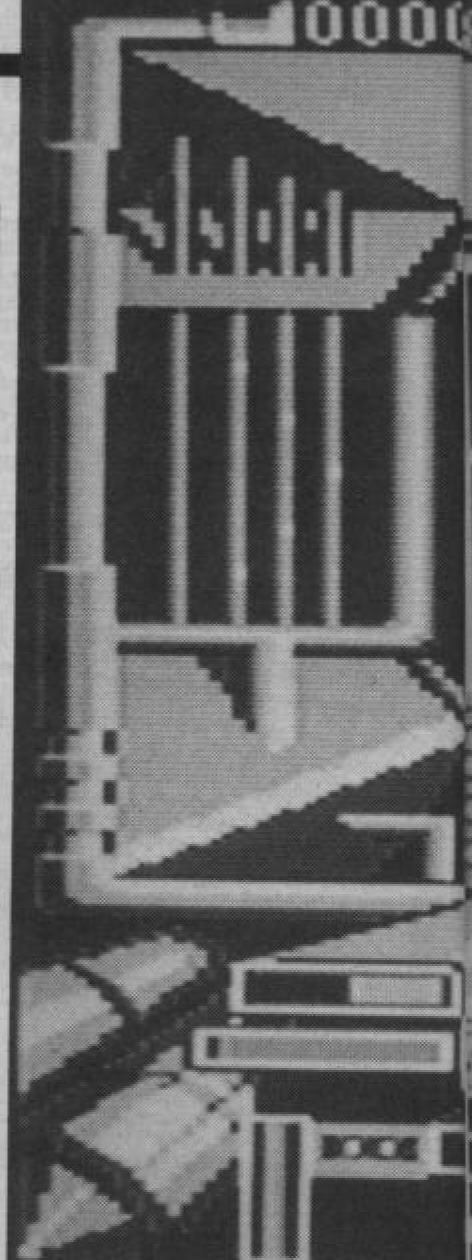
Flying at low speed and altitude over Novenia's power lines – the only way the AGAV can refuel

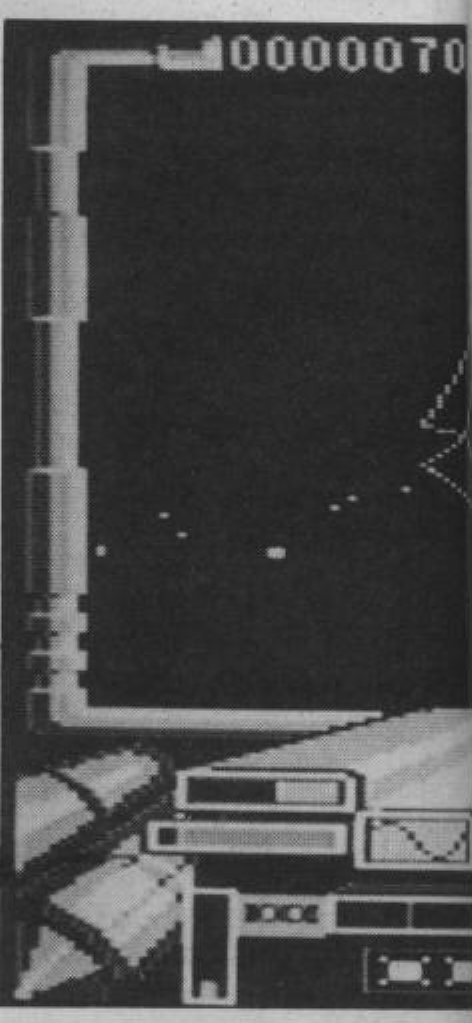


Docking with a depot. An extra missile is given, all damage is repaired, and shields and laser energy are replenished. Unfortunately the depot can't refuel the AGAV . . .

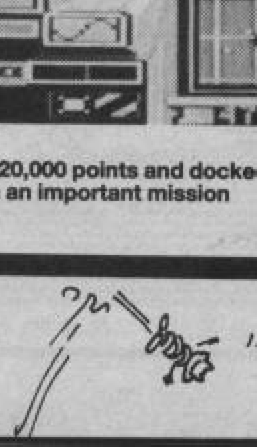


Having scored 20,000 points and docked with a depot, Jaysan and Katra are given an important mission











Starglider One in range . . . Missile Launched! The tele-guidance system drops down and is used to guide the missile

used as an aid for positioning the AGAV and shooting enemy craft.

Dotted around the planet's surface are four rotating repair depots. When the AGAV docks with a depot, laser energy and shields are replenished, all damage is repaired, and an extra missile is provided – storage space permitting (the AGAV can only carry two missiles at a time).

The depots house computers, which can be interrogated to reveal data on the seventeen different Egron attack craft. These include armoured transport vehicles, battle tanks, and five different types of fighter, all of which can be destroyed with repeated laser fire. Walkers are large box shaped creatures which walk around the planet on two spindly legs, depositing missile launchers. Stompers are similar in appearance to the Walkers, only they are hardier and far more aggressive. Walkers and Stompers are impervious to laser fire, and can only be destroyed with a well-placed missile.

Deadliest of all though, is the leader of the Egron fleet: Starglider One, which patrols the planet at a leisurely pace, shooting anything remotely threatening – such as ancient AGAV fighters. It takes three direct hits with missiles to destroy the Starglider.

After 10,000 points have been scored, the Egrons become tougher and more hostile. When 20,000 points are obtained the AGAV is called in to dock with a depot, so that Jaysan and Katra can be sent on a special mission.



Starglider looks like something really special. The packaging is glossy and the manuals lead you to believe there's a lot of game to sink your teeth into. Once you get to the core though, it all seems a bit stale. The instructions are a mite misleading and tell you that there is option to redefine the keys, when there isn't – pressing the relevant key starts the game! The graphics are sparse – objects are deliberately set far apart so you don't get too many things on screen at once, and when you do encounter some Egrons everything slows down. The 3D effect works fine on the Egron craft, but the dots representing the horizon don't work at all. The AGAV really needs an artificial horizon to help gauge what sort of flightpath you're on. The worst part of this game though, is the sluggish response to joystick movements. It takes ages for the AGAV to turn and chase after an Egron craft, and by the time you've completed the manoeuvre the target has usually disappeared over the horizon! Overall, Starglider is vastly overpriced for what it offers.



Starglider is nothing special and is considerably flawed by its slow speed and response to directional control. In play there is no feeling of flying generated – the dots that make up the scenery move slowly and in a jerky fashion. What really annoys me though, is that after blasting away and getting a high score the Hall of Fame is a real let down – black and white leaves me with little sense of achievement. Fifteen quid is a lot to pay for a reasonable game and a few flashy booklets.

PRESENTATION 94%
Very good in-game presentation, and slick, but somewhat superfluous packaging.

GRAPHICS 79%
Detailed information panel and competent vector graphics.

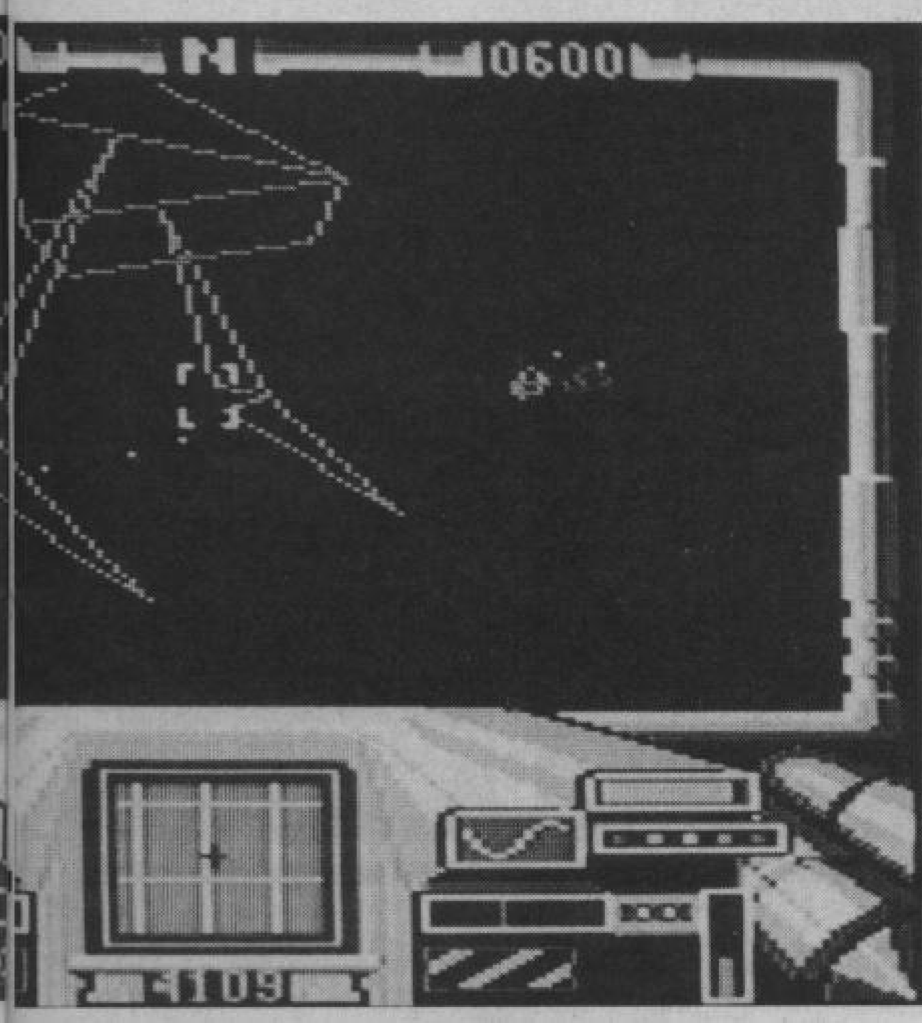
SOUND 64%
Reasonable title screen tune. Weak spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 82%
Immediately addictive and deceptively easy to get into.

LASTABILITY 61%
The speed and repetitive nature of the gameplay can prove quite tedious.

VALUE 55%
Glossy packaging doesn't compensate for a mediocre game.

OVERALL 68%
Essentially a simple 3D shoot 'em up, but a brave attempt at trying something which can't be done effectively on the 64.



Passing uncomfortably close to a Walker

FIRELORD

Hewson, £8.95 cass, £12.95 disk, joystick only

All was well in the land of Torot – until an evil Queen managed to trick a dragon into parting with the all-powerful Firestone. She then used its magical powers to put a curse on the land, spreading fire and calling up ghostly apparitions to put fear into the poor inhabitants of Torot. After a few weeks of frightening the populous, the Queen issued an ultimatum: she would return the Firestone to the dragon if the four legendary Charms of Eternal Youth were delivered to her. A brave knight, Sir Galahad, volunteered himself for the task and sallied forth in search of the Charms.

Firelord is a flick-screen arcade adventure in which you play Sir Galahad on his quest to find the four Charms scattered about Torot. As he wanders the streets, ghostly apparitions appear and attack, draining the gallant hero's energy. To protect himself, Sir Galahad must find an enchanted crystal which gives him the ability to throw fireballs.



Firelord **is great fun to play – but unfortunately the appeal doesn't last long enough to merit the nine quid asking price. The game starts well with a very atmospheric tune, and the graphics look as though a lot of time has been taken on them – the characters are very detailed and well animated. The action is immediate which makes** Firelord **very easy to get in to. Going into the houses and trading is good fun to start with, but the appeal soon wears off.** Firelord **looks like a good game on the outside, but it lacks original and inspiring substance.**

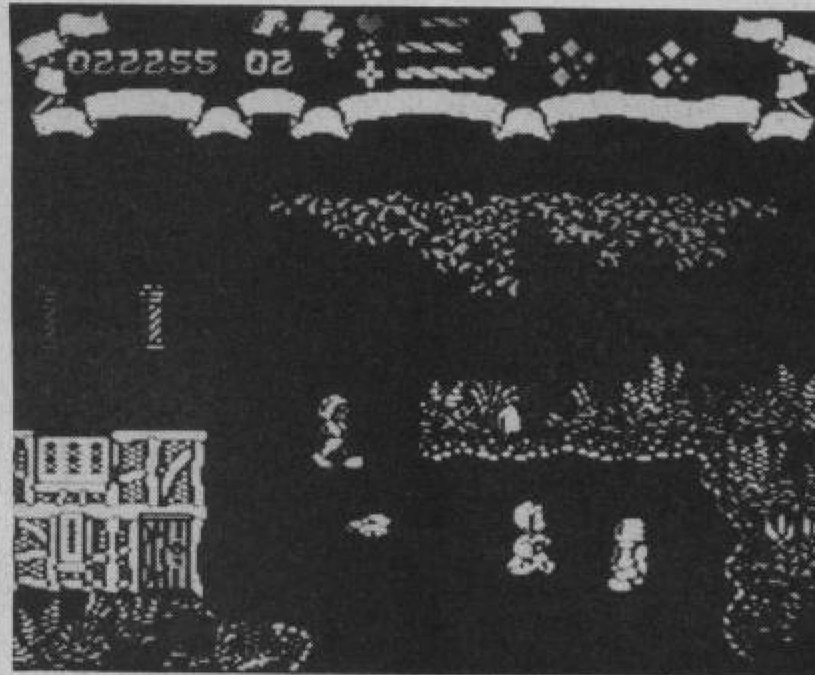


This is a typical maze arcade adventure – there's plenty to explore and work out, but there's just nothing new to get excited about. The graphics are alright and the sound is quite nice, but all in all it's just another in a long, long line of mediocre arcade adventures. If you don't like this sort of game, or are just getting bored with playing the same type of thing over and over again, give it a miss.

Galahad's energy is displayed in numeric form at the top of the screen, and a life is lost when this energy level reaches zero. Fortunately, lost energy can be replenished by collecting items of food, including sacks of corn and bushels of wheat.

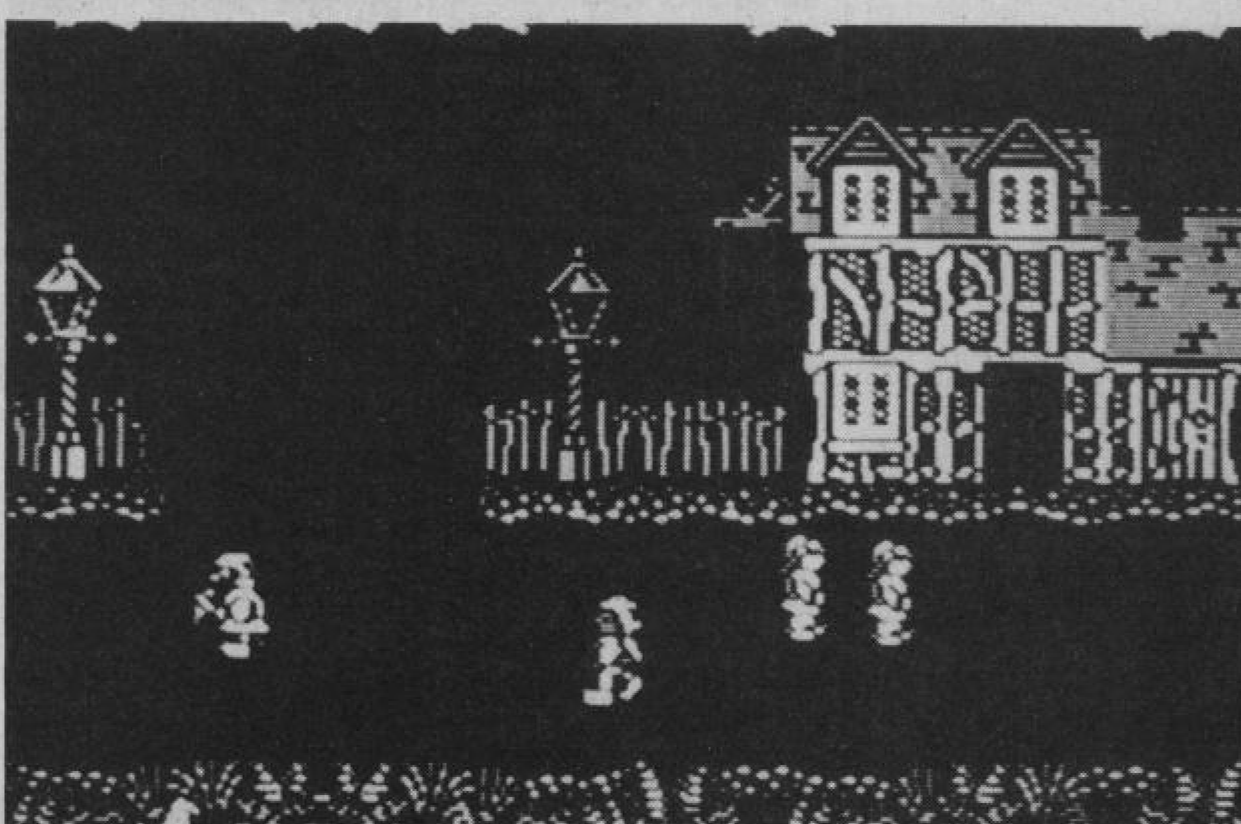
Dotted throughout the land are houses occupied by peasants, herbalists, witches, wizards, knights, wise old men, and bishops. On entering a house the screen display changes to show the occupant's face, which looks left and right. Objects in the house are shown below, along with whatever Galahad is carrying. Items can be bartered to acquire information, extra energy, Charms or weapons. A cursor is used to select items and the owner decides whether the offer is profitable or not.

If Galahad is feeling lucky he can steal objects by moving the cursor to the 'steal' icon at the bottom of the screen. However, if the occupant witnesses the theft, Galahad is put on trial and the screen shows a cursor rapidly moving between the words 'innocent' and 'guilty'. Pressing the fire button stops the cursor, and a life is lost if the cursor stops on guilty. This ordeal has to be endured three times before Galahad is free to continue with his task. But if he fails to deliver the four Charms of Eternal Youth to the ageing Queen, Torot is damned forever!





I think Firelord **is one of the most beautiful games ever to grace the Commodore. Right from the title screen the atmosphere hits you straight in the face – the music suits it perfectly and sets you up for what is a great exploration game. It's very tempting to disregard** Firelord **as just another 'run-around' game, but there's a lot more to it – like the trading screens and the added excitement of the possibility of theft!** Firelord **is a very consistent game – nothing appears slack, and with a free Hewson gift thrown in for good measure it shouldn't be missed.**



PRESENTATION 84%
Novel instructions and polished in-game presentation.

GRAPHICS 71%
Pleasant backdrops, but ineptly drawn and animated sprites.

SOUND 83%
Beautiful, atmospheric title screen tune. Bland spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 73%
Straightforward objective, but tainted by the feeling of *deja vu.*

LASTABILITY 66%
Over five hundred locations to explore, but not enough variety or original gameplay to enthral to any great length of time.

VALUE 67%
Nothing outstanding on offer for the price.

OVERALL 68%
A playable but fairly run-of-the-mill arcade adventure.

ZZAP! TEST

AVENGER

Gremlin Graphics, £9.95 cass, joystick only

After gaining plenty of fighting experience bashing hell out of a host of evil denizens, and subsequently 'finding his inner self' in *Way of the Tiger*, Mr Ninja has now got to embark on a mission of immense peril and danger. The local oriental arch-villain, Yaemon – Master of the Flame, has stolen the Scrolls of Kettsuin from the temple of Ninja's god, Kwon. Just to rub salt into Mr Ninja's already inflamed wounds, the rotten Yaemon also topped his stepfather – what a dishonorable gentleman.

As you can imagine, Mr Ninja is extremely upset by this violent intrusion into his quiet secluded life, not to mention distraught at the loss of his stepfather and the scrolls of his God. Consequently he's sore. Boy, is he sore . . . a sorer person you never will see. After stomping about the place in a stinker of a mood for days, he's finally come to a decision – he's going to show that evil son-of-a-gun Yaemon what's what, by breaking into his fortress, swiping the stolen scrolls back and finally killing the head of the household – Ninja style. Striking while the iron is hot, Ninja heads off to Yaemon's desolate fortress . . .

You take the role of the Ninja, oriental goody-two-shoes and kung-fu specialist (or goody-two-fists as our Eastern chums say). The game is a scrolling arcade adventure which is viewed from above. Ninja is joystick controlled, and can be made to run in all four directions, landscape allowing. Pressing the fire button throws a ninja star (as long as Ninja has some) which kills any living thing on contact. If there are no ninja stars handy, the fire button activates a ninja kick, bashing an adversary if it's within range.

The quest of revenge begins outside the strangely titled Quench Heart Keep, Yaemon's stately seat. From here you must find a key to open the front door. Once inside, the three guardians of the Keep must be destroyed (careful here, as they have to be killed in a certain order). As well as the three guards there are hoards of Yaemon's minions which thunder about the fortress, dying for an intruder to come into their realm so they've got an excuse to beat somebody up. Marauding menaces aren't the only thing which hassle the would-be avenging Ninja, there are living floors with spikes that rise and fall, hindering the progress of the heroic avenger, and diminishing his energy if he stands on one.

All this fighting reduces the Ninja's energy, this is indicated at the bottom of the screen as a series of disappearing dots. Luck-



This isn't the most original game in the world, being a variant on the fashionable Druid/Gauntlet **style game format, but it's still pretty playable (at least it's not another bog-standard fighting game). The game only supports one-player action, but there's plenty of fighting and adventuring to keep a happy Ninja involved for a couple of days. The background graphics and pictures around the side of the screen are colourful and neat, and there are some great sprites beetling about the place too. The sound suits the game, it's by no means brilliant but it works well and generates the right atmosphere. If you're after an action packed** Druid **type game then look no further.**

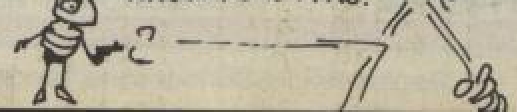


Ninja explores one of the many corridors of Yaemon's fortress. Looks like trouble ahead . . .



A treasure chest and key are there for the taking. Unfortunately two meanies are waiting to interrogate the Ninja . . .









There are some superficial similarities between Avenger **and** Druid **but, even though** Avenger **lacks a two player option, I reckon it's a better game. It's packed with action, there are hundreds of locations to explore (and map) and plenty of problems to solve. Not only does** Avenger **play well – it looks very pretty indeed (well, the sprites are a bit simple, but the backdrops are lovely). All in all, a neat little game which should appeal enormously to anyone who enjoyed** Druid.



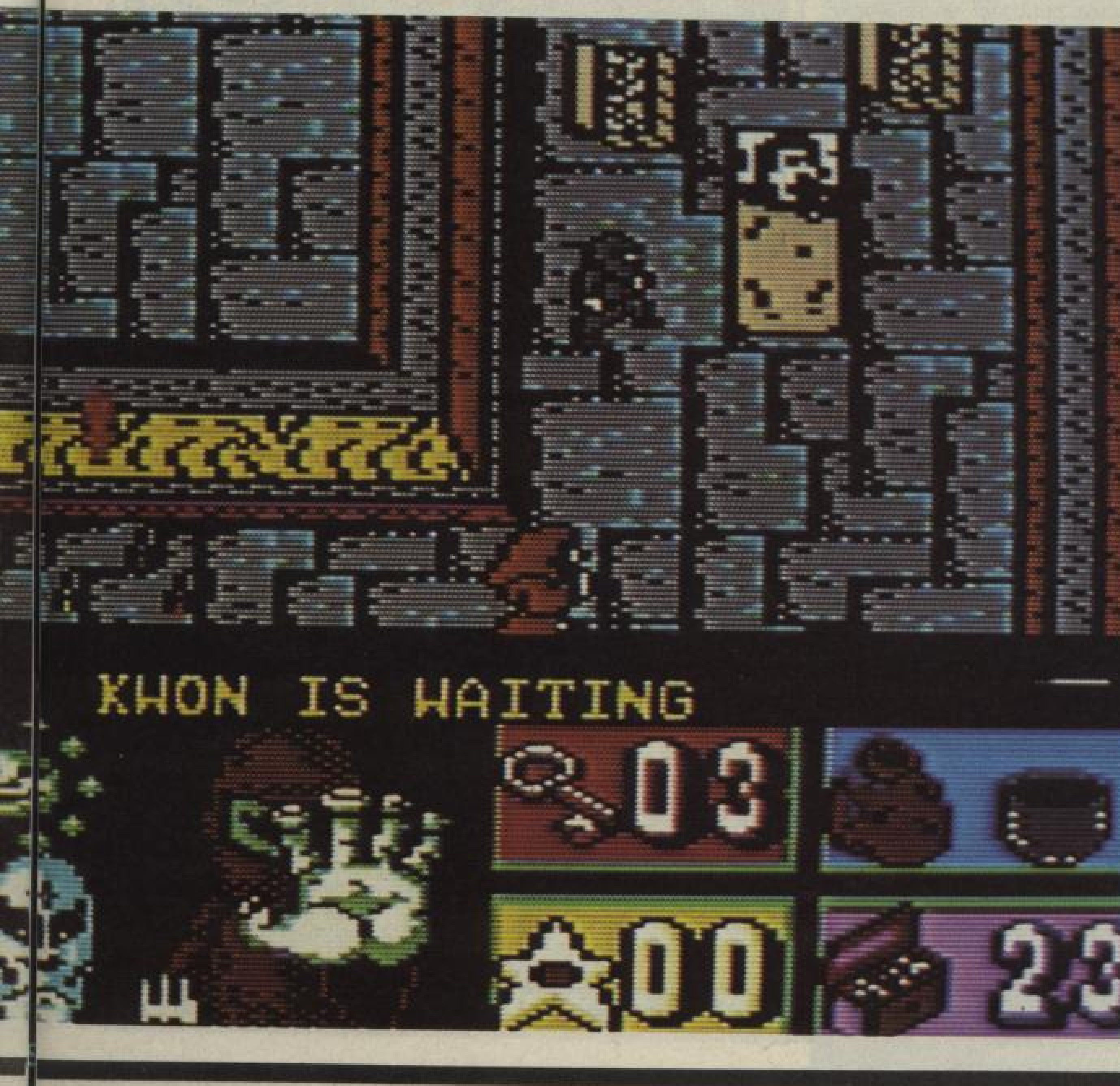
More fighting for Ninja . . . this time it's a blue swathed matey sticking in the boot

ily Kwon can be called upon to replenish the lost energy, although sometimes if he thinks you're stalling and is angry with you, he will refuse to help.

The fortress is huge, with numerous rooms just waiting to be explored. These rooms contain various objects such as magic swords, keys, ninja stars and iron fists (amongst other things), which help you in your task. They also contain treasure, which can be taken for personal gain (in other words – good old-fashioned greed). In some of the rooms there are trapdoors and grills which give access to other levels of the fortress, both above and below. Using these you must wend your way through the complex maze of the fortress, and recover the scrolls stolen by that fiend Yaemon: doing so avenges your father's death, appeases Kwon and completely diminishes Yaemon's power, reducing him to the rank of a coolie! Har har, and serve the rotten swine right too!



I'm impressed with Avenger, **it doesn't offer anything new to 64 owners, but it's a compelling and attractive game that has been written well and highly polished. People are bound to compare this with** Gauntlet **and its many clones, which is a shame because it has a deeper plot than other 'kill the baddies, get the treasure and escape from the dungeon' type games. The graphics are really good, the sprites are well defined and the backgrounds are very pretty. All in all, I think that** Avenger **is a bit overpriced, but it's neat all the same and worth a look.**



PRESENTATION 88%
Attractive in-game presentation and some useful features – such as a restart and a pause.

GRAPHICS 86%
Overall very bright and 'pretty' with colour used to great effect.

SOUND 72%
Reasonable title screen tune, atmospheric sound effects.

HOOKABILITY 88%
Action packed and absorbing from the very first play.

LASTABILITY 85%
A very large landscape to explore and lots of tricky problems to solve.

VALUE 83%
Lots of action for your money.

OVERALL 86%
A highly competent addition to the growing range of *Gauntlet* inspired maze games.

CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING

US Gold/Epyx, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick only



'Yo' old lady tussles better than you!' screams your 295lb opponent. Unperturbed, you yell back, 'Haaarggh! Oooorowrr . . . KILL!' Did that scare him? We'll just have to wait and see.

Welcome to the world of *Championship Wrestling*, where rules and competitors are made to be broken, and mercy is the ultimate sign of weakness. Eight completely different opponents, each with their own character and personality, wait to mangle and maim you in the most painful way they can.

Upon loading, an option screen is presented which allows you to select either practice or championship wrestling. Selecting either of these options loads a screen where you can input a name and choose a wrestler. If the practice option is chosen you are asked to select another wrestler to battle with, the championship option however, automatically puts you up against a computer opponent, or the other human controlled players if more than one human opponent is playing.

When the wrestlers have been selected, the screen changes to show a view of the ring with a large animated picture of each wrestler's face, along with text underneath each picture revealing the grappler's origin and displaying his motto. The theme tune of each wrestler is played, and once the music is over the contest begins.

The ring is displayed using forced perspective 3D with the wrestlers beginning their bout facing each other in the centre of the screen, rather than from the corners in more traditional fashion. The bout is three minutes long and to win you must pin your opponent's shoulder blades to the canvas for three seconds, if neither player achieves this, then the wrestler with the most points is declared the victor.

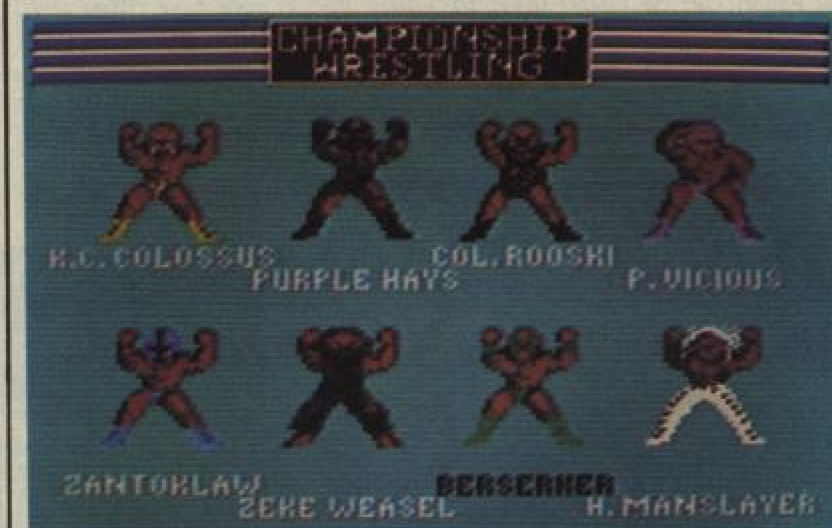
The matman is controlled by use of the joystick and fire button, using a combination of these you can access up to twenty-five different moves. Pushing the joystick in one of the four standard directions without the fire button depressed results in your wrestler walking about the ring in the relevant direction. Pressing the fire button and moving the joystick gives an action move – either a punch, kick, flying drop kick or spin kick. If you are in really close proximity you can get your opponent in a headlock, and once he's in your grasp go on to pin him. A more confident wrestler could lift his opponent in preparation for a body slam, pile driver or even an aeroplane spin, and then throw him – perhaps out of the ring if the move is timed correctly. There are other moves too: a wrestler can use the ropes to whizz him across the screen; jump onto the corner posts and then leap upon the opponent; punch out of a strong headlock grip or use the custom move, a specialised personal move which every wrestler has.

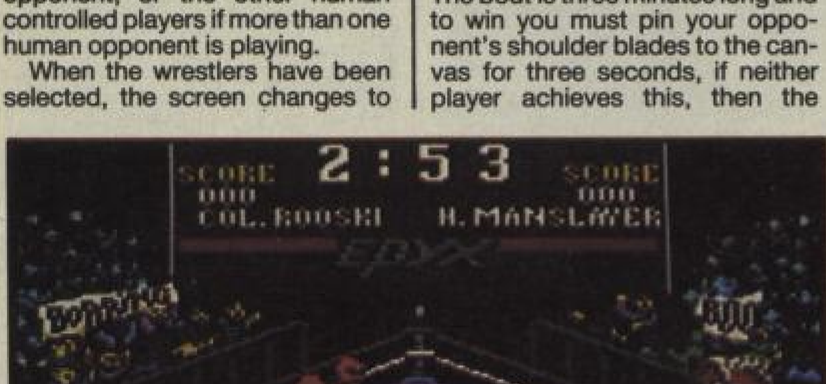
Each wrestler has a strength gauge, shown at the top of the screen as a bar which shrinks as the wrestlers get knocked about. If a wrestler is knocked down or pinned when his energy is low there's less chance of him getting up again, so softening up an opponent with a series of kicks and punches before actually going in for a grapple seems a sensible tactic.

The onlooking crowd is very fickle and ythey react to your performance as they see fit – if they think you're being boring you'll get a slow hand clap, and perhaps even worse. On the other hand, excite them and they'll cheer you on! As moves are completed, a score is given which the game keeps track of, and on the disk version there's a high-score table which automatically saves out good scores.



This is great fun, miles better than the other wrestling game on the market. The whole program is extremely well presented, from the very beginning when you get the superb character pictures, to the way the movements can be accessed from the joystick. The wrestlers are extremely well drawn with great use of colour, and they're very well animated too. The game plays well, but I must say I was a little disappointed at the multi-player option, it would have been nice to have the computer opponents included in the competition. The other niggle is that a round only lasts three minutes and it can all end with one pin – it should have been the best of three pins, making each bout last much longer. It's a shame that the cassette version will be multi-load. Still, it's great fun, takes a little time to master and a is a nice departure from the regular beat em up style games already on the market.







This alternative beat 'em up is certainly better than Rock 'n' Wrestle. **In fact it drops on** Rock 'n' Wrestle **from a considerable height.** Championship Wrestling **is great fun and offers a significant challenge with eight increasingly difficult computer opponents and the option of two player bouts. However, like many recent American release** Championship Wrestling **is multi-load, so the cassette version may well prove painful. Look before you leap.**

PRESENTATION 82%
Informative instructions, excellent use of joystick and slick in-game presentation. Annoying multi-load.

GRAPHICS 81%
Superb use of colour and the sprites are well animated.

SOUND 88%
Eight different theme tunes and suitable spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 80%
The variety of movements take a bit of getting used to, but apart from that the game is very enjoyable to play.

LASTABILITY 76%
Eight different wrestlers to master, and there's the multi-player option to add variety.

VALUE 75%
Not cheap, but there's plenty of action on offer for prospective binary grapplers.

OVERALL 80%
An entertaining wrestling game which works well. Give it a whirl if you're into fighting games.

STORM

Mastertronic, £1.99 cass, joystick only

Storm the warrior is a superhero; a bold, fearless, heroic righter of wrongs – and he even remembers to put his Y–fronts inside his trousers! But, while he was off doing daring deeds, some evil person called Una Cum made off with Storm's old lady, Corrine, and imprisoned her.

Storm is a bit put out by all this, and pausing only to enlist the aid of his best friend, Agravian the Undead, he legs it over to Una's castle to free his beloved.

The action takes place in the castle dungeons and is viewed from above. As the hero (or heroes if the game is being played in two-



At first glance Storm **looks like it might be a promising game. The music is quite pleasant – even it doesn't really suit the game's theme – the graphics are bearable, and the presentation is reasonable. It wasn't until I started playing that I realised that the whole thing has one major drawback – the method of control, which is similar to that in** Asteroids. **In a game which requires some nifty manoeuvring this just isn't suitable, and spoils what could have otherwise been a fairly decent budget game.**

player mode) leaves the current location, the next room flips into view. A scrolling message at the top of the screen describes the location and lets the player(s) know if a character's strength is getting dangerously low.

As soon as a room is entered,



Mastertronic jump onto the Gauntlet **bandwagon with this rather poor clone. The graphics are garish and lack any sort of clarity, and the sprites don't move smoothly at all. Even the two player mode is dull and there's nothing which saves** Storm **from being a very poor program, even with a low price tag. There are several better budget games available – take a look at them instead of this.**

generators produce groups of deadly denizens which run towards Storm and attack him, gradually sapping his strength. Fortunately the evil creatures can be zapped with magic, in the form of scrolls, masks and amulets, which have to be collected. When activated, the magic item destroys any evil creatures on screen – a sort of 'smart bomb' effect. Other useful items scattered about the dungeon are food (with added marrow-bone for extra strength





Gauntlet **variants seem to be all the rage nowadays, but I'm sorry to say that** Storm **fails to captivate the same sort of compulsion or playability. The graphics are colourful, but quite confusing at times and it's easy to lose yourself amongst a group of nasties. The awkward controls don't help much either.** Storm **is far from impressive, and barely worth the asking price.**

and vitality) and armour.

Storm must collect three snake brooches in order to unlock the door to Una Cum's laboratory, which is where Corrine is being held captive. But if Storm dies before he can rescue Corrine . . . well, that's tough.





PRESENTATION 76%
Two player option, reasonable instructions and in-game presentation.

GRAPHICS 39%
Large, quite colourful, but often indistinct.

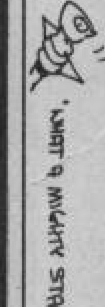
SOUND 58%
Bland title screen tune and in-game spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 38%
Little to impress or enthral.

LASTABILITY 31%
Slow, and dull with it.

VALUE 41%
Cheap, but not cheap enough for what's on offer.

OVERALL 32%
A very poor *Gauntlet* variant.



ZZAP! TEST

DESTROYER

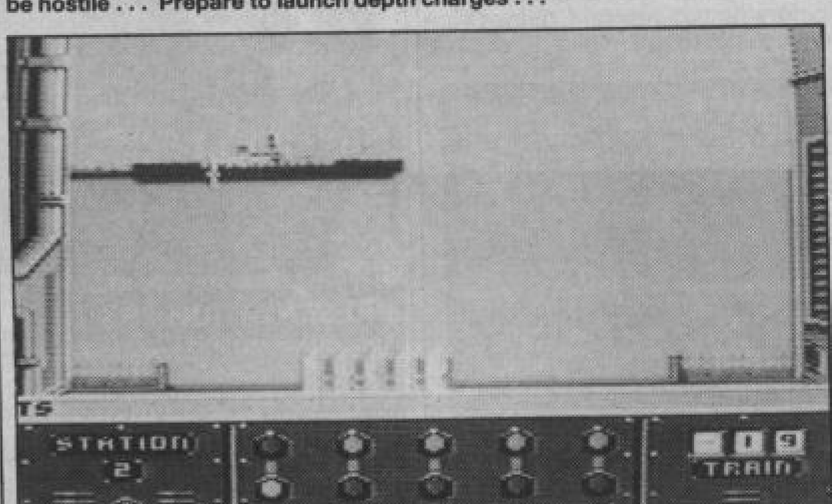
US Gold/Epyx, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick with keys

D*estroyer* is a simulation which caters for the more nautically minded, as it puts you in command of a fully-armed Fletcher Class American Destroyer and its crew. However, as Captain of this vessel you have to single-handedly win the wars in the Pacific and Atlantic.

There are seven different missions, all of which have three levels of difficulty – easy, intermediate and advanced – and range from hunting down U-Boat Wolfpacks to defending merchant ships from Kamikaze bombers and Japanese warships. These duties call for an intimate knowledge of the destroyer, so detailed instructions on the destroyer's workings are included, covering the ship's different 'stations'. Each station is accessed by entering two letters – BR for bridge, RA for radar, DC for depth charges, and so on.



Blip . . . Blip . . . 'We've picked up something on the sonar, Sir. Could be hostile . . . Prepare to launch depth charges . . . '



Cruiser in range . . . Torpedo launched . . .

The first station is REPORT which produces a short, scrolling message from radar or damage control. The HELM station has pursuit and evade modes along with manual and automatic pilot, whilst the CREW STATUS station allows the Captain to command his sailors.

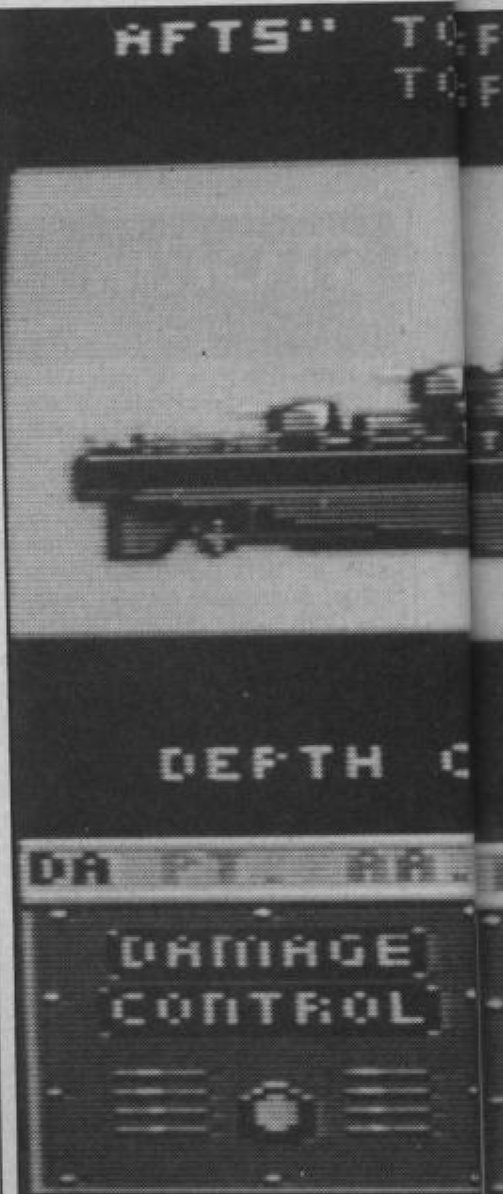
Anti-aircraft guns and torpedo launchers are situated either side of the ship, and 5-inch/38 calibre, semi-automatic guns are located forward and aft. The anti-aircraft guns are used primarily for defence, whereas the 5-inch guns and torpedoes are regarded as offensive armament.

From the bridge, offensive and defensive stations can be stood to attention, either individually or all at once by sounding 'General Quarters'. The bridge display consists of a large panel full of toggle switches and dials. Moving the joystick left highlights each toggle switch in turn and pressing fire button activates the function.

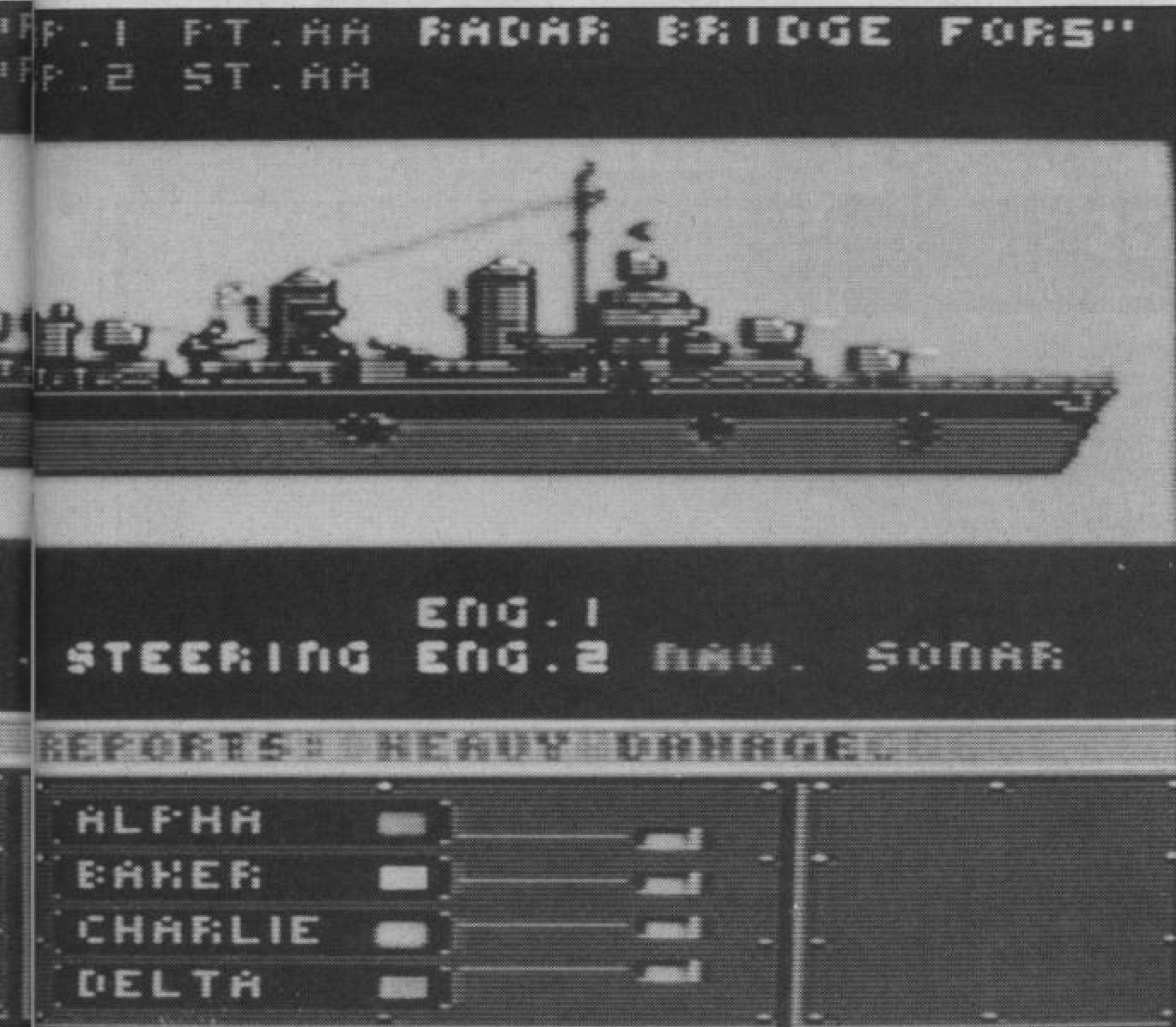
The ship is moved either automatically – after plotting a



This strikes me as being an arcade game cum simulation, rather than a dedicated simulation of naval warfare. It has all the attention to detail of a good simulation, but not enough stimulating arcade action. Shooting down planes is the most enjoyable section of all, but this soon proves tedious and I lost interest. To be honest, I'm not fond of simulations. However Destroyer is more absorbing than most other simulations I've played. Even so, it takes a lot of effort to get results – something I'm not prepared to do with a game. What irritates me most though, is that the different screens have to be loaded from disk. I dread to think what the cassette version will be like – that is, if US Gold bother to release Destroyer on cassette.





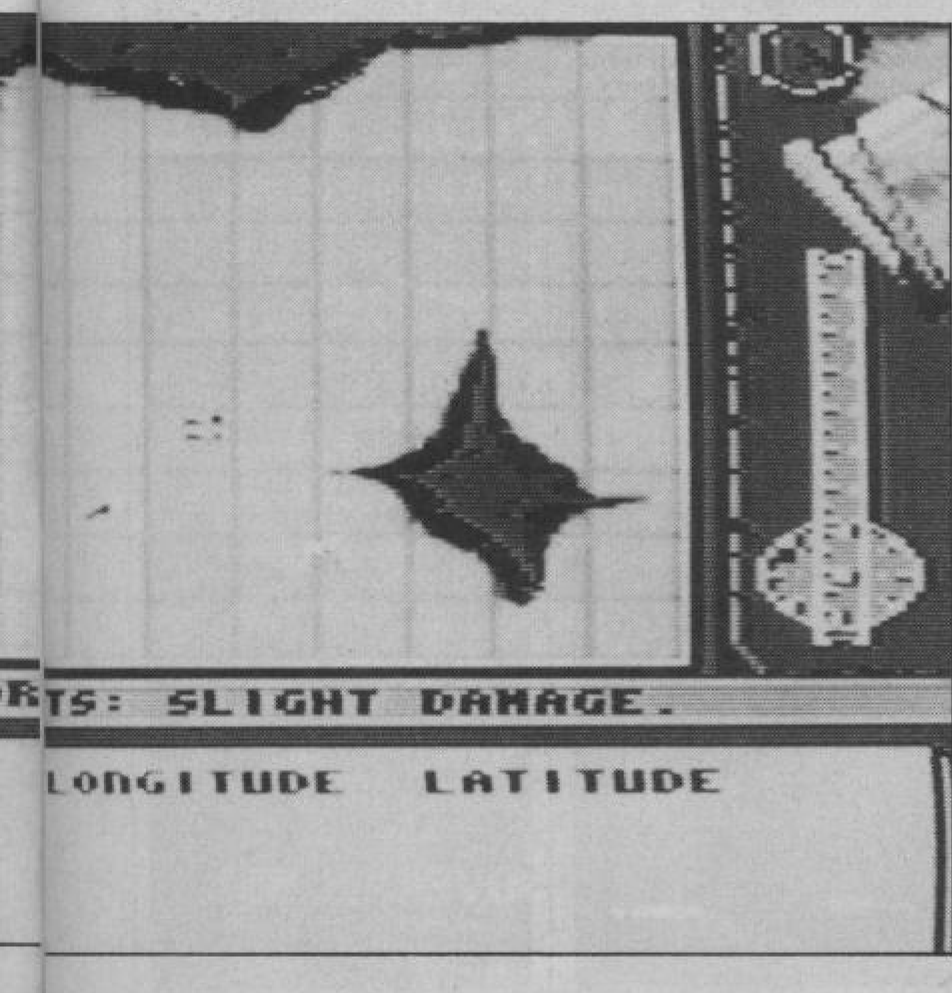


Damage Control. Heavy damage has been sustained during a fierce battle with enemy planes

course from the navigation chart, or manually, by steering from either the bridge, sonar, radar or observation stations. Highlighting the dial that shows a 'steer to' heading allows the ship to be turned to a different heading. The speed meter and speed controls give the Captain the option of 'full ahead', half speed, slow, stop and slow reverse, all accompanied by a nice ring of the bells and a repeat of the order – just like the movies!

A constant check must be kept on the status of the ship, and damage repaired immediately. If ten or more stations are damaged beyond repair, the destroyer sinks and the game ends with a report on your achievements as a Captain . . . while you go down with the ship in the time-honoured tradition.

Navigation. A small fire has charred the charts and maps, otherwise everything is ticketty-boo

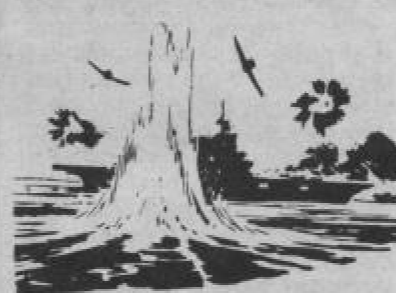




Getting used to controlling your very own fully armed destroyer and its array of weapons is a very tricky business indeed. But once mastered, the game becomes totally engrossing. A constant eye must be kept on the scrolling messages as although you maybe involved in say, chasing a submarine, you are likely to be subjected to air attacks or shelling – and a slip of concentration can prove disasterous. The graphics are excellent, especially effects such as planes crashing into the sea and the launching of torpedoes. With the many missions that can be undertaken and their varying difficulties, things rarely become dull. Destroyer **has a totally compelling air about it that makes you want more. To my knowledge it's the only simulation of it's kind and a brilliant one at that. I'm sure it will have a long lasting appeal.**



Destroyer **is one of the most playable simulations I've seen on the 64. The instrumentation is beautifully drawn, and although the spot FX are quite simple they work well enough. The anti-aircraft section features some superb spot effects and beautiful animation which really adds to a sense of atmosphere. I especially like the way enemy planes, once hit, topple into the sea with a beautiful 'SPLOOSH!'. The submarine hunting section in which the sonar screen needs to be constantly watched mimics the monotony of the real thing a little too well! Overall though, the small imperfections that could be put down to the realism of** Destroyer **do not detract from what is a highly absorbing game that should keep hardened simulation players coming back for more and more.**



PRESENTATION 90%
Detailed instructions and a well thought out control system. Unfortunate loading system though.

GRAPHICS 87%
Superb representation of the various components of the ship, combined with some impressive visual effects.

SOUND 72%
Simple, but suitable spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 81%
Comprehensive instructions pave the way to an absorbing simulation.

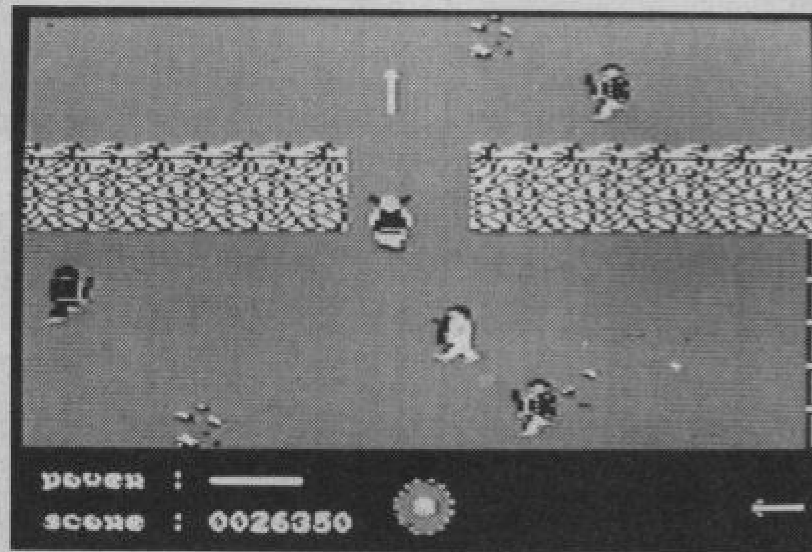
LASTABILITY 86%
Five missions and three levels of difficulty to keep any budding seaman coming back for more.

VALUE 80%
A worthy investment for those interested in naval warfare.

OVERALL 85%
An accurate and absorbing disk based simulation.

THE VIKINGS

Kele Line, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick only



In days of old when knights weren't bold (only because they hadn't been invented yet!), Vikings were regarded as the real 'men about town'. They enjoyed nothing more than a bit of burning, raping and pillaging. And that's what this game is all about – well, with the exception of the raping. The player takes the role of Erik – a mean, hard and very hairy Viking. This Norse hooligan has decided to seek his fortune by plundering the castle on 'Death Island', which is actually a chain of two small islands near to his home.

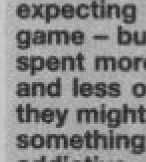
The quest begins on the beach of the most southerly of the two islands. Erik's first task is to scour the landscape and find a sword and shield so that he can defend himself. However, the island dwellers have taken a disliking to him, so they throw spears in his general direction as soon as he pops into view. Being hit by a spear results in Erik's on-screen energy bar shrinking a little, eventually resulting in the loss of one of his five lives. Finding a sword equips Erik with an unlimited supply, which can be thrown at the locals by pressing the fire button. If a shield is found the enemy spears have less effect on his energy bar.

Next, a ladder has to be found which can be used to gain access to a flaming torch. This gives Erik pyrotechnic abilities, so he can burn down the thatched huts scattered about the island. Hidden under one of these huts is a ship's mast – recovering it along with an oar, Erik can return to the beach, enter a longboat and set sail to the next island.

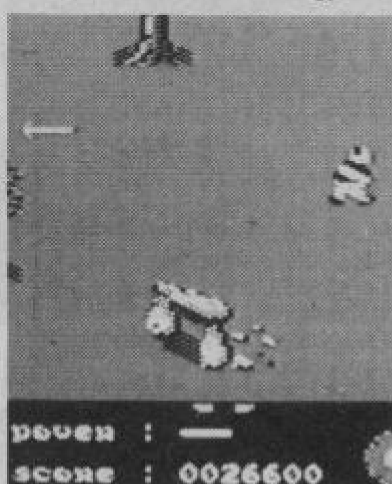
The northern island is where the real fortune lurks, but this can only be taken if the wall surrounding the landing area is demolished. Having managed this, the Viking can stomp around the landscape in search of new objects – with the ultimate aim of entering the treasure-filled fortress at the northernmost point of the island. This isn't as easy as it sounds though – the inhabitants of this island move twice as fast and throw twice as many spears!



The Vikings is basically Rambo with a bit more to it. The presentation is very good, although a little over the top at times, but the game itself lacks any impressive or innovative features. It's playable and quite addictive, but after a few hours play I grew tired of doing the same thing over and over again. All in all, a pretty tame first release from Kele Line.

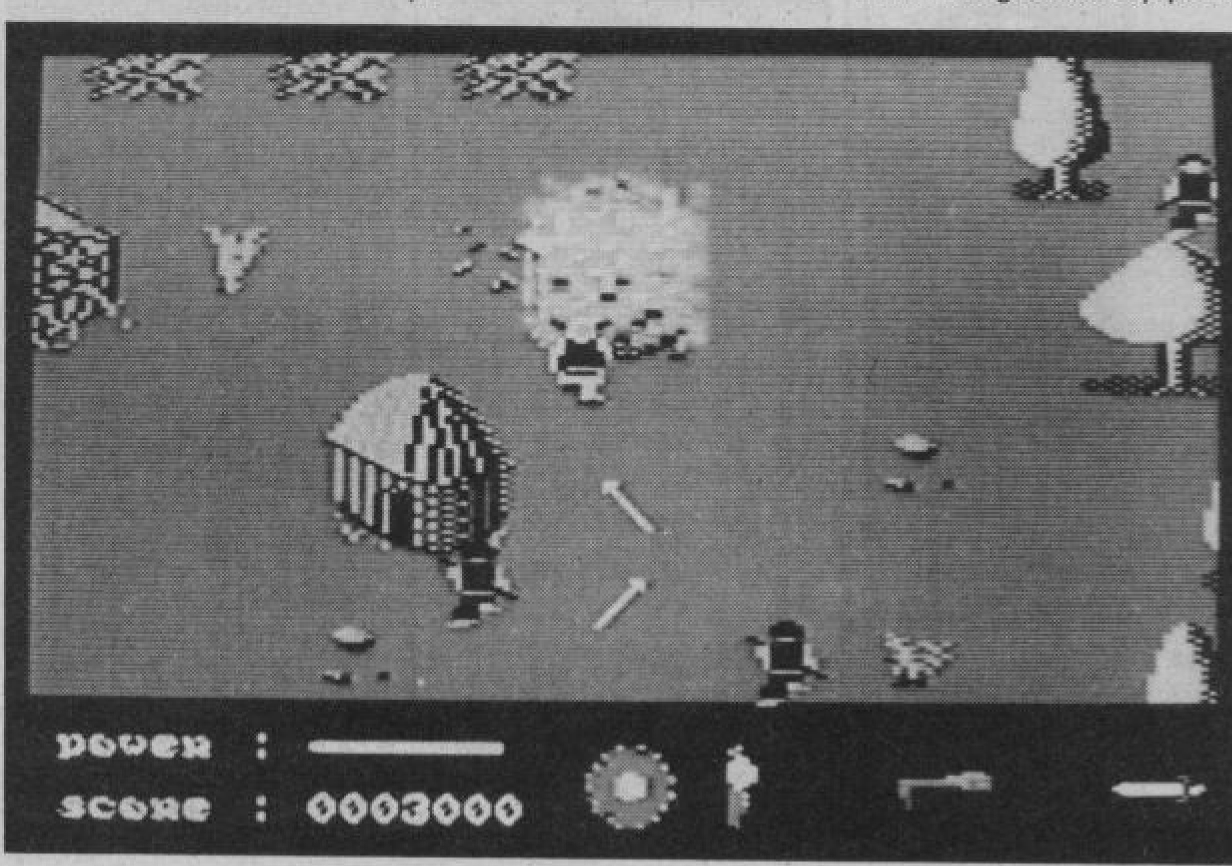


After the enlightening title sequence and the wishy-washy bit of music I was expecting a pretty decent game – but if the authors had spent more time on the game and less on the presentation, they might have come up with something a touch more addictive. The graphics are fairly basically designed. The character detection isn't very accurate, which makes it very hard to sprint off around the screen. It seems to me that there is no random element to the first level, as the items are always in the same huts. The Vikings **is a nice idea, but the game doesn't really take off.**





This looks and plays very, very similarly to Rambo **– even the action runs in a similar sort of way. It's still enjoyable to play, but the problem is that it only takes a few games to master and once you've completed it there isn't anything to draw you back again. The title screen is full of really neat tricks: a full screen picture, a scrolling message which goes right along the bottom of the screen and loads of colourful raster interrupts. There's even a really great attract mode cartoon sequence, but what's the point of making everything look pretty if the gameplay turns out as weak as this?**



PRESENTATION 93%
Full-screen loading picture, and very pretty attract sequence.

GRAPHICS 68%
Bland use of colour, coarse sprites and reasonable backdrops.

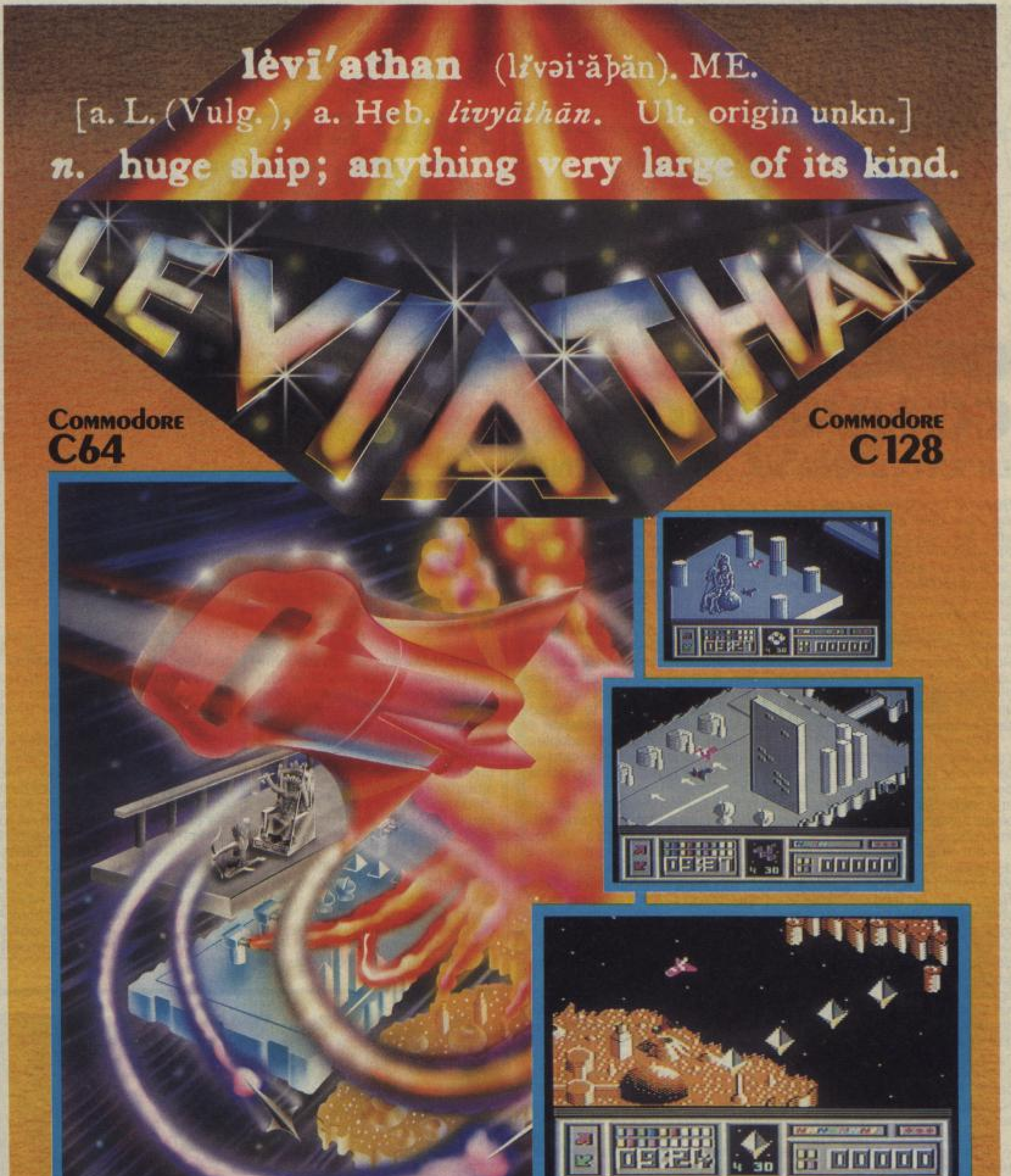
SOUND 71%
A decent soundtrack plays throughout, but the spot effects are rather thin on the ground.

HOOKABILITY 57%
Simple enough blasting action, but there's a niggling feeling of *deja vu*.

LASTABILITY 46%
Fun, but not overly compulsive.

VALUE 45%
Ten quid is asking too much for an average game with a pretty title sequence.

OVERALL 55%
An average variant of a tried-and-tested theme.



lėvī'athan (lĭvəi·ăþăn). ME.
[a. L. (Vulg.), a. Heb. *livyāthān*. Ult. origin unkn.]
n. huge ship; anything very large of its kind.
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ZZAP! Flash

OF ARCADE CONVERSIONS,

LICENCES AND . . . EVERYTHING

Seven O'Clock, Wednesday evening. All is quiet at ZZAP! Towers – until the tranquil atmosphere is brutally shattered by the impatient ringing of a lone phone. The receiver is lifted, a button is depressed – it contemplates suicide, but is cut short by the distant, laid-back tones of bespectacled Activision/Electric Dreams supremo Rod Cousens . . . a trans-Atlantic call to ZZAP! with news of more than a dozen licensed arcade conversions which are soon to grace the Commodore 64 . . .

Licensed from Atari are *Tempest*, an old 3D vector shoot 'em up fondly regarded by many as being one of the all-time classics, and *Super Sprint III*, a three player, single screen driving game viewed from above.

From the Sega stable (they designed *Space Harrier*) come three brand new titles . . . *Enduro Racer* is an exciting 3D, first-person perspective, cross-country motorcycle racing game regarded as the follow up to *Hang-On*. *Wonder Boy* is set in the depths of the jungle and pits the (cute) hero against all manner of hazards as he scampers across a vertically scrolling landscape. The one to four player *Quartet*, on the other hand, takes place in the depths of space where a small army have to battle their way through many scrolling levels of shoot 'em up action.

Bally's one to three player monster fighting game, *Rampage*, will also be available on the 64 through Activision. You can play one of three monsters and have the delightful task of destroying skyscrapers, soldiers, tanks, helicopters, planes, civilians – and the other monsters!

New from Data East (of *Kung-Fu Master* fame) is *Fire Trap*, in which you have to escape from a burning building. Other conversions include six forthcoming Nichibutsu (*Moon Cresta*, *Terra Cresta* and *Mag Max*) arcade games, although there are no details of their titles as yet. Mr Cousins also added that there's the distinct possibility of another 'major title' . . .

Onto the original stuff now, with news of Gamestar's improved version of *On-Field Football*. Apparently they've re-written the bulk of the code and turned it into a 'through the helmet view' simulation of American football. Hopefully, there will be a review in the next issue.

Aliens Part II is another game based on the film *Aliens* – only this time it's an Activision US production, written for the American market. It's a 3D shoot 'em up, apparently very different to Electric Dreams' binary interpretation of the film. We shall see in a couple of months when the American version is due to make its way across the Atlantic.

More good news for science-fiction fans is that *Star Raiders II* is nearing completion. It's a 3D shoot 'em up, akin to its eight-year-old predecessor, *Star Raiders*.

Whispers from Activision US say that David Crane's next project is currently under development. There are no titles or details as yet, but rest assured that we will let you know as soon as we have them.

Adventure freaks prepare to freak out! Coming soon from Activision is *Portal*, a triple disk text adventure which has been two years in development. The White Wiz will be getting his teeth into as soon as Activision manage to conjure up a copy.

Nik (Orlando) Pelling has completed *Dandy* for Electric Dreams, and his vertically scrolling shoot 'em up *Firetrack* is complete and just aching to be reviewed . . .

Finally, Activision will also be distributing System 3's *Last Ninja* and *Bangkok Knights* (two Oriental beat 'em ups) – when they're finished . . .

By the way, if you were wondering about the absence of a *Labyrinth* review this month – well, it was due to a lack of time. As for Activision's *Transformers* and *Big Trouble in Little China* . . . apparently the former is released, but we still haven't received a copy for review, whereas the latter is now complete and due for release shortly. Never mind, there should be reviews of all three games next month.

AND EVEN MORE ARCADE CONVERSIONS . . .

US Gold have recently tied up a licensing deal with Atari, snapping up the two System One arcade hits, *Road Runner* and *Indiana Jones*. The former is a zany chase game based on the television series, and features wonderful graphics and a rather sick sense of humour. The latter puts you into the boots of the multi-talented Boys Own hero.

There are also rumours of a brand new Epyx submarine simulation which follows in the footsteps of *Destroyer*. Set in World War II, you can play the captain of an American submarine or a Nazi U-Boat and tackle many varied missions. More news when we have it.

SIX FULL AND THREE HALVES PLEASE

Gremlin have announced the imminent release of four new titles with a £4.99 price tag. The first, *West Bank*, is based an old arcade game which has just been converted to the Commodore. Then there's the long-awaited 3D, forced-perspective arcade adventure *Pentacle* , along with a shoot 'em up called *Zyron* (programmed by Kingsoft) and a *Snooker and Pool* double pack. News and reviews as soon as possible.

Cries and whispers also reveal news of four sequels: *Thing on a Spring II* is currently being designed and programmed, while the latest in the Monty Mole series, *Auf Weidersein Monty*, is approaching completion. *Bounder* fans can bounce about with joy – *Bounder II* is well on its way, and all you naughty *Nipper* fans be patient – *Jack The Nipper II* will soon be with you.

Beat 'em up fans will be pleased to hear that work on the *Samuri Trilogy* is well underway. The finished product is an oriental beat 'em up of sorts, featuring 'huge characters'. Finally, Gremlin are to release a single-load, three part arcade game called *Convoy Raider*. It puts you on-board a powerful ship with the responsibility of tracking and destroying enemy fighters and hunting and depth-charging submarines. There's also something to with guiding exocet missiles . . .

AND FROM OCEAN . . .

The latest in Imagine's new series of 'arcade classic' conversions is Nintendo's manic, one or two player platform game, *Mario Brothers*. There's an old Atari ROM cartridge version available (very rare, but great fun), but Ocean have decided to produce their own version from scratch. It's rumoured that other Nintendo goodies are in the pipeline, but at the moment there aren't any details . . .

From the Sensible chaps that brought you *Galaxibirds* and *Parallax*, comes *Wizball*. *Set in a 'freaky' horizontally scrolling world full of 'freaky' obstacles and characters, Wizball* puts you in control of a wizard inside a ball. An evil being has 'stolen' the colour from nine different landscapes, and it's up to you to restore the colour scheme.

You start with simple, bouncy ball and can build it up into mega-ball by picking up extra weapons. Spinning around the ball is a cat with a violent streak (down his back). When an alien is shot it turns into blob of chemical, which the cat has to catch before it hits the ground. The colours then have to be mixed – which is when the wizard comes out of ball. Programmer Chris Yates reckons it's 'fairly big' with 'lots of levels', and should be finished in 'a month or so – unless we encounter and major problems'. Thank you Chris.



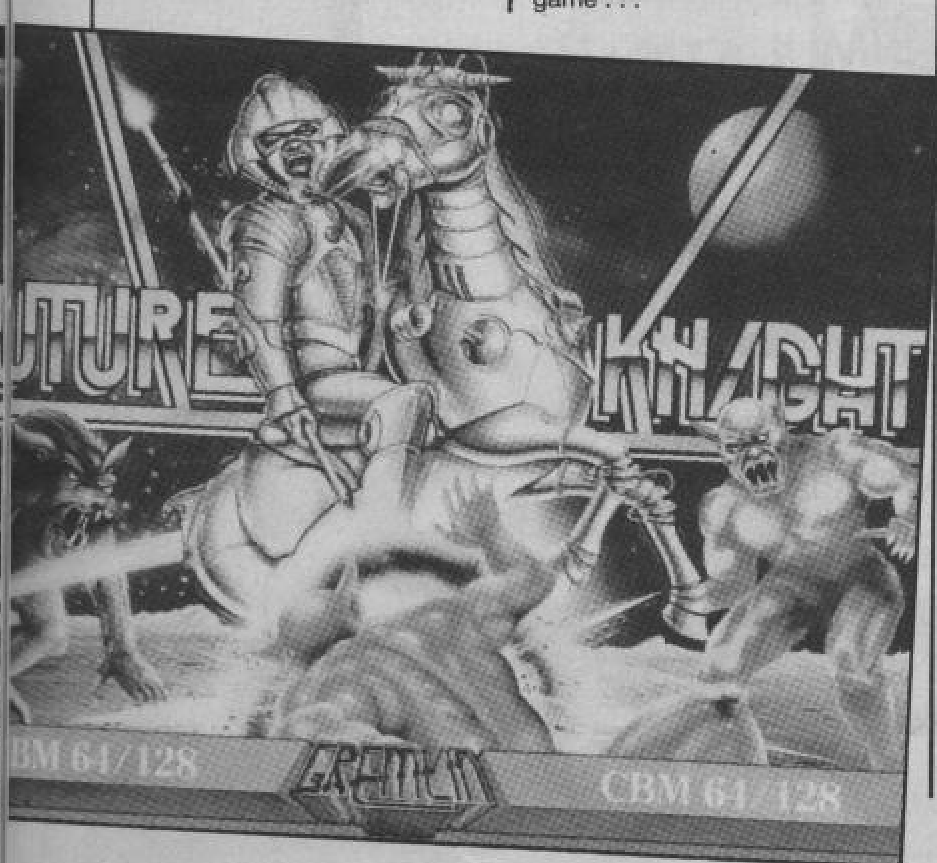
COMING SOON . . .

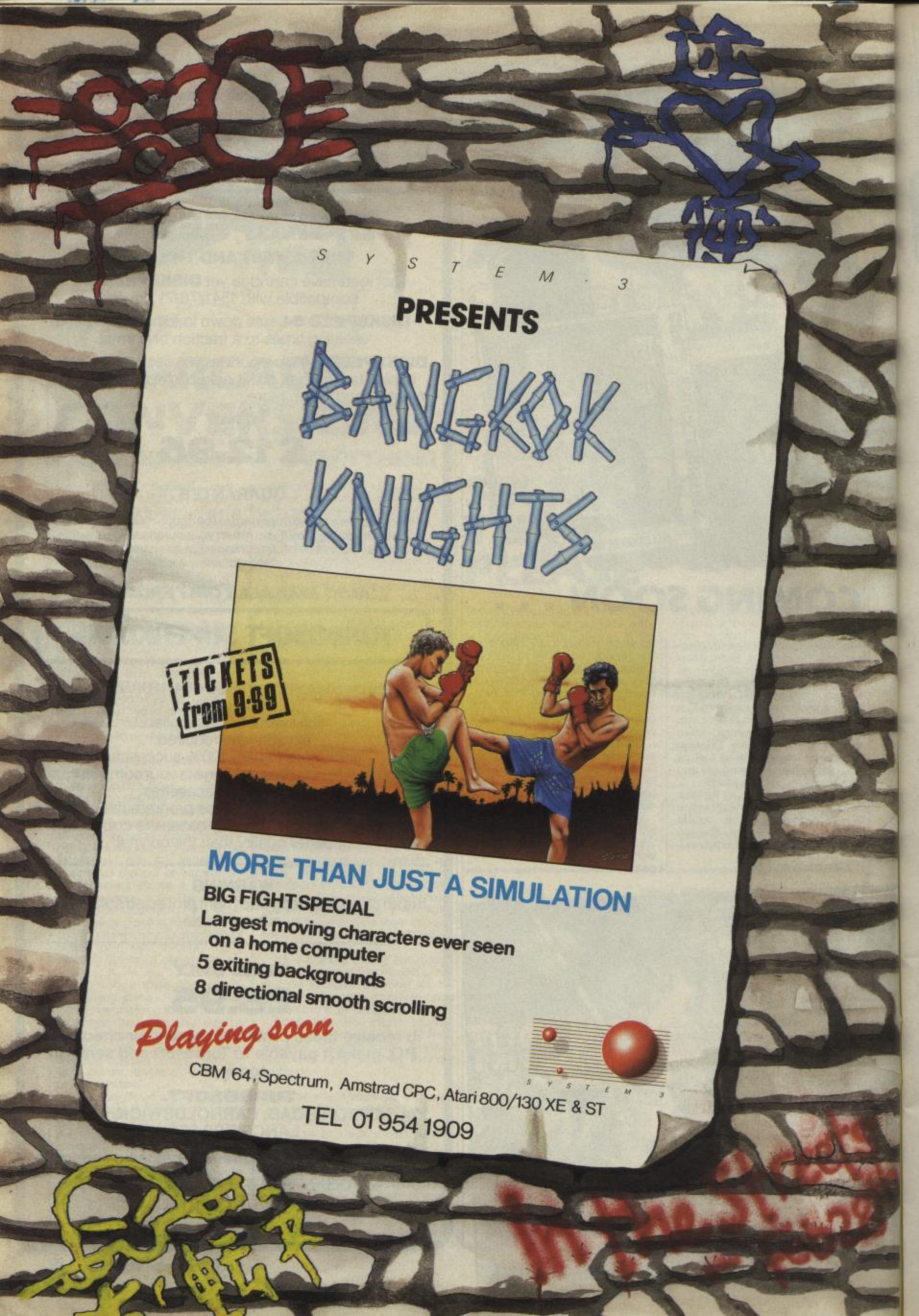
Next month sees a review of American Action's *Blood 'n' Guts*, a one or two player *Decathlon*-type game with a difference. Set in the halcyon days of 900AD, there are ten 'original' events including Cat Throwing, Human Hit (where you throw rocks at a human victim locked in stocks), Ale Drinking (where you must drink as fast as you can without throwing up) and Axe Throwing (at each other).

Another review to look forward to is *Nosferatu – The Vampyre*, a 3D forced perspective arcade adventure from Piranha. You are put in control of three characters – Jonathan Harker, Lucy Harker or Van Helsing, who have to work as a team to defeat the evil Vampyre. This involves completing three different tasks: escaping from Nosferatu's castle, rescuing Lucy, and finally killing Nosferatu himself – a grisly task, if it be told.

Gremlin Graphics' arcade adventure cum shoot 'em up *Future Knight* and Melbourne House's *Knucklebusters* also arrived just a little too late for review in this issue . . .

And finally . . . Elite reckon they are changing the graphics in *Bomb Jack II* – not that this will make a significant difference to the game . . .



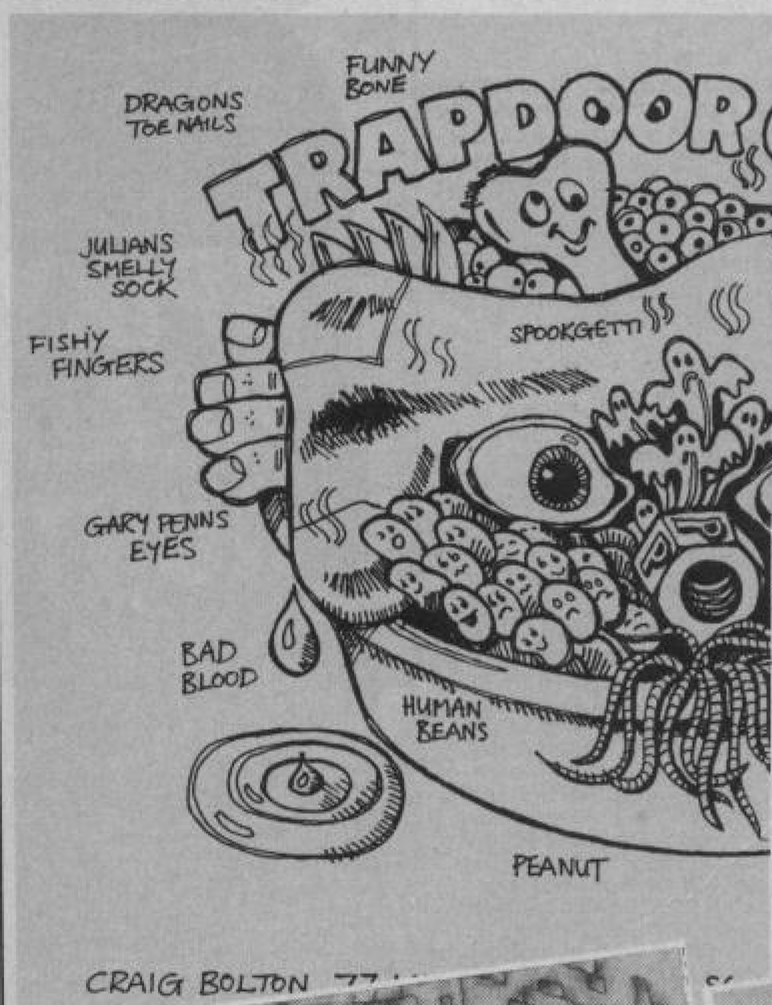


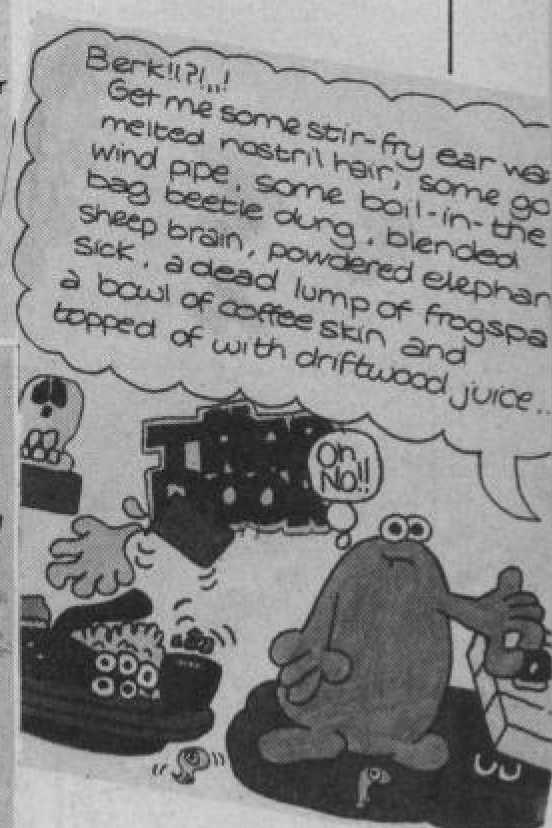
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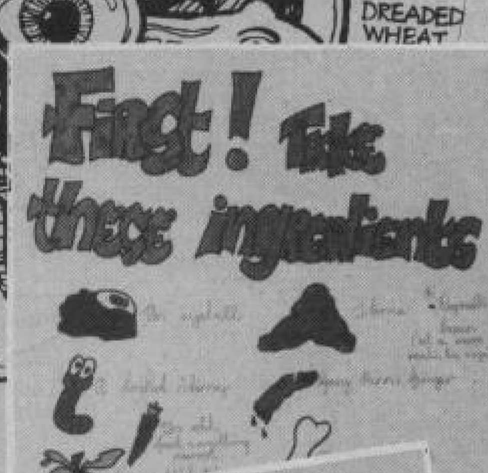
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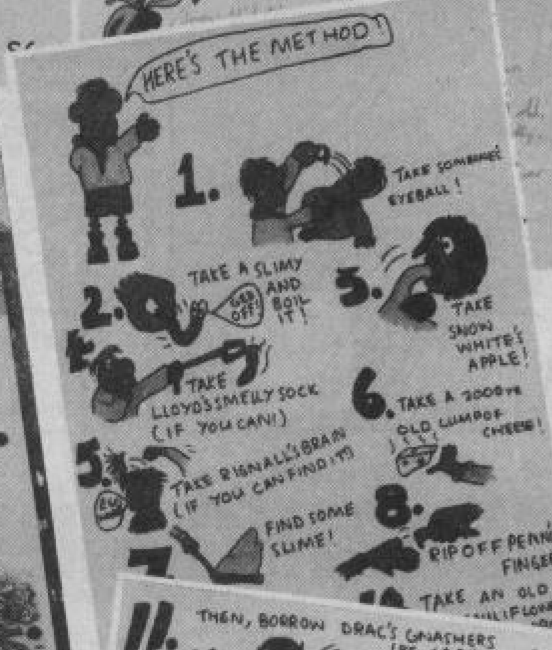
SLIME GLORIOUS SLIME

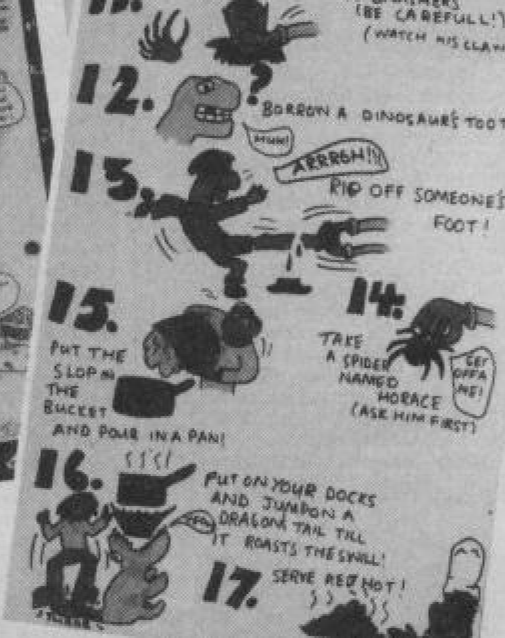












Mark David Holden from Bolton BL6 6LJ supplied the most imaginative entry – which can be seen here – so he wins a bendy Berk, Drutt and Boni, and a copy of the game TRAPDOOR, thanks to PIRANHA. 30 runners up each receive a copy of the game TRAPDOOR . . .

Craig Bolton, Sheffield, S6 5FY; Aaron Wedgbury, Tewkesbury, GL50 5ED; Richard Littler, Northwich, CW9 8JE; Steven Cunningham, Co Durham, DL5 5AH; Michael Peel, Cheshire, CW8 2NF; Gavin Kagan, West Midlands, B95 6AX; Andrew H Bullock, Aylesbury, Bucks; R J Wallnian, Surrey, RH9 8JW; Alex Price, Swansea, SA4 2LS; R C Fokkema, 9736 LB Groningen, Holland; Matthew Fitzgerald, New Malden, Surrey; Brett Hill, Edinburgh, EH7 4LY; Steve Murray, Aberdeen, AB1 6HY; Steven Beveridge, Somerset, BA3 6RA; Matthew Ember, Wembley, HA9 9SJ; Andrew Russell, Bognor Regis, West Sussex; Robert Johnson, Pontypool, NP4 ODE; Stephen J Alexander, Bristol, BS17 5BZ; Gareth Leonard, Tyne and Wear, NE36 0LS; Steven Miller, Lancs, OL6 8BX; Lawrence Wong, Wiltshire, SN15 4PX; Andrew Sturt, Kent, BR3 3AP; Andrew Birkitt, South Milford, LS25 5HG; Iam Newman, Peterborough, PE1 4RU; S Kelly, West Yorks, BD19 3BD; Adam Firth, Leominster, HR6 0LH; Colin Cheghall, Dundee, DD4 6TL; Miss L Marriott, Derbyshire, DE5 7JT; James Neame, Clacton-On-Sea, CO15 6EQ; Ryan Hemmings, Stevenage, S91 4DU

WINNERS : WINNERS : WINNERS : WINNERS :

IAN'S ARTY ERRORS

AUDIOGENIC offered the original artwork used for the inlay of their new release PSYCASTRIA, along with 25 copies of the game. **Andrew Bond** from Tyne and Wear NE25 8NL was first out of the correct entries bag, so he wins the artwork. The following 25 runners up each receive a copy of the game PSYCASTRIA . . .

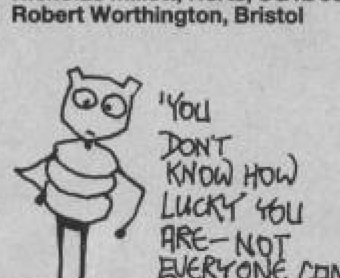
D Dymond, Chesterfield, S44 6TT; B Ainscough, Dublin 11, Ireland; Ryan Hemmings, Stevenage, SG1 4DU; Paul Gale, Bucks, HP10 9NR; Kevin Sooben, Herts, AL2 1QF; William Morton, York, YO2 1NF; Gavin Bland, Chesterfield, S41 08J; P Needham, Notts, NG16 3PJ; Sam Calverley, Hull, North Humberside; Steve Bean, Croydon, CR4 7AY; Steve Li Yoo Foo, London, SE14 6QQ; Andrew Sharp, Devon, EX31 4BG; Michael Griffiths, Kent, ME1 3LH; John White, Rugby, CV22 6LG; John Nicholas, Hemel Hempstead, HP2 6AH; Paul Evans, Cornwall, TR15 3NY; Matthew Stunt, Hemel Hempstead, HP2 7BG; Mr M Ayres, Norfolk, PE30 4ND; Les Marsh, Lancashire, WN8 9BD; Damian Stevenson, Norwich, NR9 4QD; Marcel Gaedhakt, Wekkhovenstkaat gg, Holland; Courtney Blackman, Milton Keynes, MK3 6LL; Mr John Balfour, Ayr, KA8 8JN; Chris Garbutt, Essex, SS13 1RR; Cassidy Miah, Stockport, SK3 0SY



FASTER THAN LIGHT

FTL asked five simple (!) questions about light, which seemed to bemuse most of you. Ah well, **Derren Nesbitt** from the Isle of Wight PO30 2BN got all the answers right and was first out of the correct entries bag, so he wins a 1541 disk drive. Well done, son. A copy of LIGHTFORCE goes to each of the following 30 people . . .

Pieter Collins, Colchester, CO3 3QA; Sean Stanley, Staffs, DE12 8DE; D Collinge, Rochdale, OL16 4HH; L Vale, Newcastle, ST5 8QG; Richard Mayer, Maidstone, Kent; Mark Eaves, Warks, CV12 9QA; Stuart Davis, Eastbourne, BN23 7AF; James Kay, Church Stretton, SY6 6EP; P K Westgate, Norwich, NR4 6LE; Jeremy Baugh, Gloucester, GL4 8LS; John Hitchman, Isle of Wight, PO90 9AU; Jonathon Gorman, Chester-Le-Street, Co Durham; Matt Burns, Church Stretton, SY6 6RB; John Hegarty, Carlow, Eire; Mr P Woodcock, Runcorn, WA7 6LA; Mr S J Lanbourne, Croydon, CRO 6JJ; Ali Hanafi, Rickmansworth, WD3 4DR; James Burton, Rotherham, South Yorks; Robert Hunt, Bradford, BD9 5JJ; Anthony Selly, Kidderminster, DY14 0BN; Chris Counsell, Southampton, SO3 2SD; David Lamb, Cheshire, SK10 2EW; Alison Holdam, Caernarfn, LL55 4NW; James Deane, Ipswich, IP1 3PF; Gary Ogden, Oldham, OL4 4RL; B Hudson, Tyne and Wear, NE10 0QY; Mr S E Mitchell, Aldershot, GU12 5LS; Dean Adams, Weston-Super-Mare, BS22 9DQ; Nicholas Millett, Herts, SG12 9JL; Robert Worthington, Bristol



SPIKY HEAD HUNT

The following FIFTY people each win a copy of QUICKSILVA's GLIDER RIDER for correctly spotting where Mr Penn was hiding . . .

Keith Robinson, Sheerness, ME12 1LL; David Jumani, Ayrshire, KA11 1JF; Victor Green, Hounslow, TW5 9HB; David Edwards, Sutton Coldfield, B74 3HS; Sean Rowe, Worthing, BN12 4AY; John Simmonds, Eastbourne, BN21 1SU; Michael Song, County Durham, SR8 4HS; Les Marsh, Lancashire, WN8 9BD; Mark Simpson, Elgin, IV30 3RT; Kenneth Burrell, Wokingham, RG11 9AY; Robert Askew, Crawley, RH10 5HP; Murray Horne, Bucks, HP10 8DH; Jonathon Dysai, Knighton, LE2 3GD; Andrew Tinning, Harrogate, HG3 1HY; Peter Young, Northumberland, NE65 0LX; N Stevens, Chelmsford, CM1 5PF; R Lake, Herts, CM21 9JR; Stuart Aspinall, Essex, RM12 6SU; R H Davidson, Gateshead, NE10 8XR; Jamie Lowe, Harrogate, HG2 9JR; Leyland Perree, Saltash, PL12 4RD; T Porter, Paignton, TQ4 6AH; R J Trevelyan, 4/7 RDG, BFPO 41; Ange Wiggins, Swanage, BH19 1PQ; Christopher Breed, Slough, SL1 2HU; Vivienne Leeves, Basingstoke, Hampshire; Tracy Walker, Coventry, CV5 9BL; R A Shrubb, Devon, TQ14 9AH; Hazel Cottage, East Lothian, EH31 2AT; Alan Orsborn, London, SW1 WH8R; David Harker, Stoke-On-Trent, ST8 7SA; David Boothman, Manchester, M35 9ND; Anil Haji, London, E11 2NT; Christian Rowan, Matlock, DE4 2JS; Mark Sexton, West Sussex, BN15 0EG; Michael Shaw, Hants, RG26 6EP; Miss Helen Standard, Liverpool 15, L15 9HN; Brett Buckley, Huddersfield, HO4 7LS; Richard Teather, Rotherham, S60 3EY; Stephen A Graham, Carlisle, CA2 7QB; Mark Allison, Ormskirk, L39 3PY; J Biddle, Suffolk, IP16 4EE; Chris Sutherland, Edinburgh, EH4 8HG; Andrew Marrow, Orkney, KW17 2QI; Darren Potter, Nottingham, N69 2DD; Philip Neesam, Cleveland, TS18 5PZ; S Hurley, Salisbury, SP1 3LJ; Matthew George, Northampton, NN3 1EX; Carl Countie, Onchan, Isle of Man; Damian Devlin, Wigan, WN3 5NA

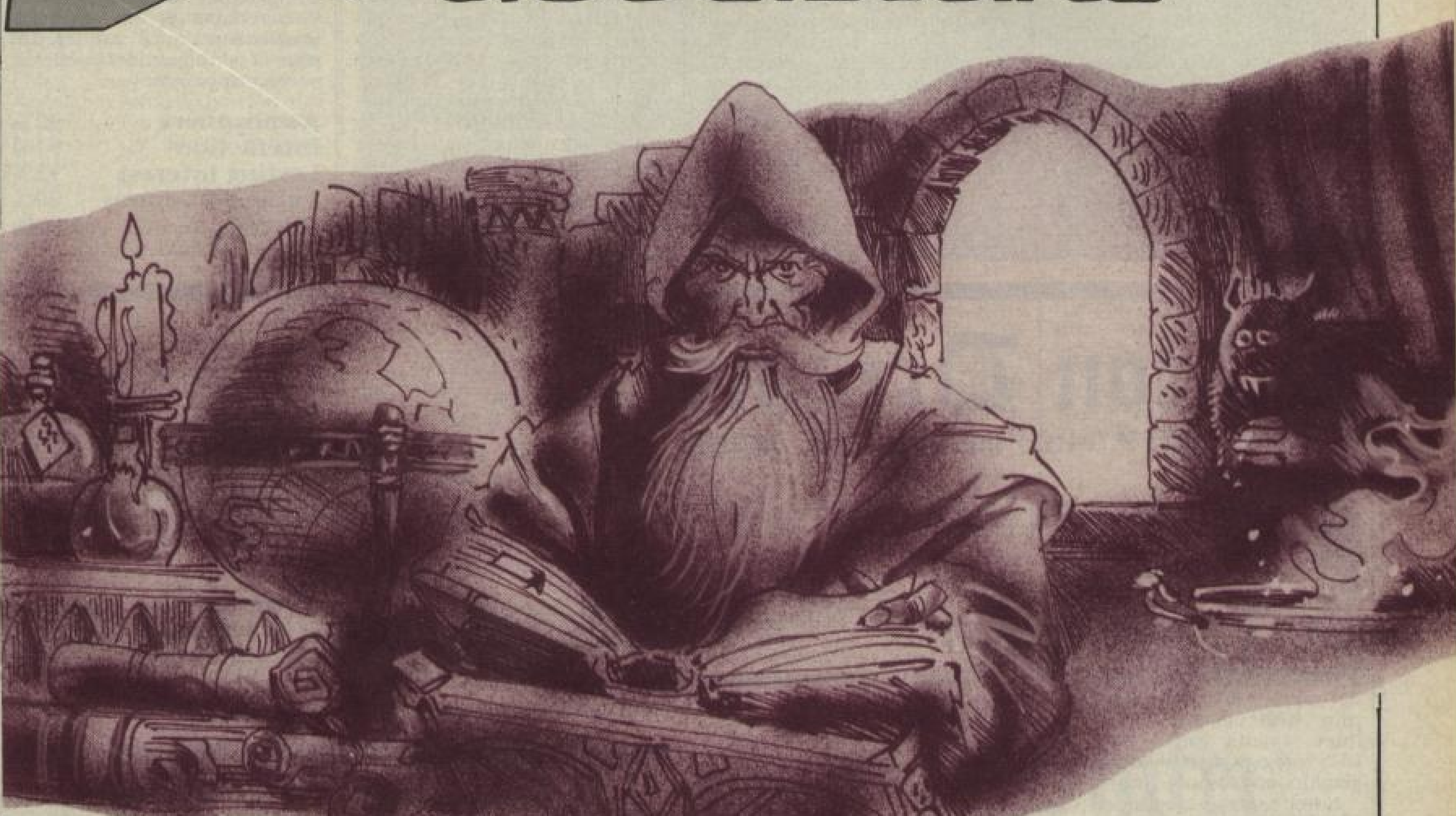
A BIT OF BEARING MINDING

Mrs Bearing is overjoyed that so many of you managed to recover her lost offspring. So are THE EDGE, who are providing a copy of their Sizzling game BOBBY BEARING to each the following FIFTY persons . . .

Chris Raynham, Derbyshire, DE5 1SA; Andrew Bond, Tyne and Wear, NE25 8NL; John Balfour, Scotland, KA8 8JN; Mark Dennis, Walsall W53 4DP; Steven Downey, Belfast, BT14 8NR; Gerrard Green, Liverpool, L17 3AA; S Humphrey, Ilford, IG6 16Z; Philip Morgan, Cardiff, CF2 6TH; Philip J McKeag, Belfast, BT5 6BS; Russell King, Colchester, CO7 8LP; Wayne Hurt, Norfolk, IP24 3EN; Neil Farrimond, Wigan, WN5 0HL; M A Tate, Tidworth, SP9 7HY; Kevan Gelling, Baldrine, Isle of Man; Azim Jasat, Leicester, LE5 6HA; Allan Lofqvist, Dyringparken 122 2mf, Denmark; Francis Maloney, Wigan, WN2 2QE; C F Jellner, Beaconsfield, HP9 1BP; Alan Strawbridge, Weymouth, DT4 9JN; Philip Richardson, Tyne and Wear, NE36 0TD; Neil Davey, Morecombe, LA4 4LS; Paul Humphries, Kent, ME10 4UW; Bobby Amaden, Gerrards Cross, SL9 8BB; Robert Law, Lanarkshire, ML3 7XD; Mark Owen, Mid Glamorgan, CF47 9SA; Lee Ellinsworth, Fleetwood, FY7 8AT; Kyle Wallace, Kincardinshire, AB3 4ET; Simon Hales, Codsall, WV8 2EL; Simon McCathie, Inverness, N2 3NN; M Hicken, Ibstock, LE6 1NX; David Tolley, Mexborough, S64 0HT; Richard Overfield, Watford, WD2 2DZ; P A Briggs, Bradford, BD12 7BX; Mark Alldred, Sheffield, S18 5YW; Simon Hegarty, Sheffield, S30 6JP; Tim Hoare, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, NE15 0DZ; Jonathan Lewis, Southampton, SO4 5LZ; Tony Smith, Welling, DA16 3LH; John Crasham, Louth, LN11 7HY; James Todd, Powys, SY20 8QG; Timothy Wong, Cheshire, WA8 0DT; Paul Gale, Bucks, HP10 9NR; Simon Parker, Herts, EN6 2BN; Ross Bennett, Flixton, M31 2SJ; Rupert Statham, Aylesbury, HP22 6LS; Lee Wymer, Merseyside, L36 7TE; Derek Lawrie, Norfolk, PE36 5EX; Andrew Smith, Bradford, BD10 8BB; Sam Calverley, Hull, HU4 7TH; Danny Hodgson, Norwich, NR12 0HJ

A complete monthly guide by the infamous White Wizard for all 64 owners who prefer games involving typed commands rather than wiggled joysticks.

ZZAP! ADVENTURE



Welcome, Wizard-friends, to yet another thrilling instalment from the Wand of the Bearded One. This month sees terror, snobbery, and Cornish legend from Infocom, sci-fi technofantasy from Adventuresoft, Silicon Dreams from Rainbird, and a host of other red-hot reviews from the White Wizard. What more could you want, except your own pet Balrog and a Prime-Minister or two to feed it on!

SIZZLER

Moonmist

Infocom/Activision, £24.95 diskette only

A new Infocom release always gets top-billing in this column, even if something as momentous as *Silicon Dreams* comes out in the same month (see later). *Moonmist* carries on the Infocom tradition of who-dunnit mysteries that include such gems as *The Witness* and *Suspect*. Is the ol' Infocom magic still there?

Yes, fellow Magicians, 'tis still there. And in this case, the Wiz is better qualified than most to judge, for not only has he dallied awhile with many an adventure, but his Cavern is also located in Cornwall, where the action of *Moonmist* takes place. There was therefore a special interest for the Bearded One in reviewing this game – and he was not disappointed.

Moonmist is set in Tresyllian Castle, which could be based on St Michaels Mount near Penzance were it not for the fact that Infocom state quite clearly that the nearest conurbation is Frobzance. I don't actually know Frobzance myself, but reckon it can't be far from St Belboz.

You have been summoned from Yankee-land by your friend Tamara – a typical stereotyped American soap-opera beauty who after college got a job as secretary to Lord Jack Tresyllian. Within seconds of her arrival they were engaged to be married, but since then things have been somewhat spoiled by the appearance of the White Lady, a ghost who bears a distressing resemblance to Jack's former girlfriend.

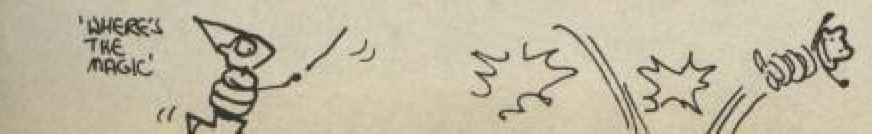
Once you find out that Jack's ex-lover disappeared without trace (presumed drowned down a well) you immediately suspect the obvious. Your task is to find out what's really going on and set young Tammy's mind at rest.

Moonmist, despite its title, has nothing whatsoever to do with Cornish mysticism, Lyonnesse, King Arthur, or anything like that. Nor is it in line with Infocom's other fantasy titles like *Wishbringer*, *Zork*, or *Sorcerer*. Instead it presents itself as a clear-cut who-dunnit and reminded me particularly of *Suspect*.

The main feature of both these games is the interaction with the other characters. In fact, chatting to them, following them about, listening to them, eating with them, and even flirting with them is essential to success. The sort of character interaction we're talking about here is way more advanced than what we see in English games, with the possible exception of the much-bugged *Sherlock* from Melbourne House.

On the other hand, *Moonmist* isn't as clever as *Suspect* in the way it handles its characters. First, there aren't as many – about seven significant ones with fewer supporting roles than in the earlier title. Secondly, they don't have as much to say. They all seem very fond of statements like 'I have no secrets – anyone can see what I am' or 'It's really not my place to say' etc. This contrasts strongly with *Suspect* where some of the characters are most verbose.

Finally, there doesn't seem to be quite the same range of possible conversation as there was in *Suspect*. However, I didn't have the game booklet with the copy I received from ZZAP!, so I may have missed out here – but for the most part the only really useful interaction was the 'Tell Me About . . .' structure, whereas in *Suspect* you can get along fine with ▶



things like 'Who Is . . .' and 'Where Is . . .' as well.

On the other hand, the map of the game in *Moonmist* is a satisfying blend of detail and size. There aren't more than about 40 locations (though I haven't visited them all yet) but each one is beautifully described. It's nice to come back to a game in the real world for once – after a while the Wiz gets a bit tired of the *Zork*s and Middle Earths, and yearns for a good ol' fashioned sitting room, complete with fireplace and comfy chair. You can certainly get that here, and if you want you can spend the whole game in your bedroom (advisable to begin with, by the way).

The nice thing about this game is that the combination of interaction and map size/detail means that you can really do some adventuring – by which I mean wandering about and exploring – without constantly having to wrestle with tricky puzzles. Like *Suspect*, the puzzles in *Moonmist* are better solved by questioning and keeping your eyes and ears open – rather than, as in many English adventures, endlessly typing variants of 'Put plastic card into slot in red door' and getting 'I don't understand' for your pains.

Of course, 'I don't understand' is one thing you will never get from an Infocom game. At the worst, it will tell you which word it can't understand, and usually it will explain why it couldn't accept your input – for example, if there are too many nouns in it. You might think this is very clever, but in fact it's easy to do and the reason UK companies don't bother is that for the most part they are criminally lazy when it comes to programming adventures.

And that's why *Silicon Dreams* comes second this month, and *Moonmist* comes first. Pricey it may be, but it deserves to join the other Infocom titles in your collection. And whatever UK companies may say about the importance of graphics, provided you can read I wager that you'll never – after finishing an Infocom game – say 'But it would be so much better with pictures'. If you do, then the Wiz reckons you've as much imagination as a half-digested plate of porridge and shouldn't be adventuring anyway.

Atmosphere	92%
Interaction	91%
Lasting Interest	92%
Value For Money	90%
Overall	**91%**

Silicon Dreams

Rainbird/Level 9. 14.95 cassette, 19.95 diskette

SIZZLER

It was pretty obvious to everyone that *Jewels of Darkness*, the Rainbird compilation of Level 9's Middle Earth trilogy, was going to sell like hot-cakes. After all it was a bargain, with updated versions of three fantastic games from the UK's leading software house, plus graphics, and so on and so on . . .

No-one really mentioned the fact that despite the trimmings all three games were ages old and out of date – and for a very good reason. Half the appeal was precisely because the games WERE ages old – they were each classics of their own kind from a time when adventuring and Middle Earth/Underground Empire were almost synonymous. And there's no better excuse to stock up on some classic and enjoyable titles than to pop out and get a compilation.

Unfortunately I don't believe these facts apply to *Silicon Dreams*. Of the three games here only one can pretend to be a classic of any kind and that's *Snowball*. The other two are more recent releases which therefore not only fail to show any real benefit from the 'revamping' process but also lack the charisma of the older titles.

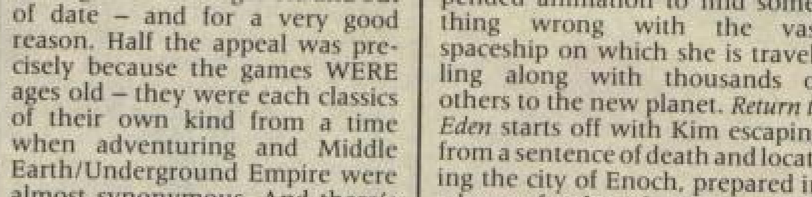
However, if you haven't got these games, this compilation is of course good value for money. And I don't want to give the impression that I think the games are poor. They're not, and *Snowball* in particular is an excellent adventure.

For the ignorant amongst you, the games form a trilogy concerning Earth's colonisation of the planet Eden. In *Snowball*, Kim Kimberley awakes from suspended animation to find something wrong with the vast spaceship on which she is travelling along with thousands of others to the new planet. *Return to Eden* starts off with Kim escaping from a sentence of death and locating the city of Enoch, prepared in advance for the colonists by robots but now running amok and attempting to wipe out the very humans for which it was built.

Finally, *Worm In Paradise* jumps ahead by a hundred years or so and shows us a totalitarian society in decay. The player awakes in a 'dream parlour' after an excellently conceived dream sequence and must then navigate the highways and byways of an advanced technological society to take over the government and (perhaps) put things to rights.

All three games now feature 'multi-tasking' graphics (though only *Snowball* was originally text-only) and improved parsers. And with the exception of *Snowball* they've all been reviewed by the Wiz in previous issues. All three can be recommended, but don't expect either the atmosphere or the 'classic' quality of *Jewels of Darkness*.

Atmosphere	82%
Interaction	82%
Lasting Interest	94%
Value For Money	92%
Overall	**90%**



Kayleth

Adventuresoft/US Gold, £9.99 cassette

After playing a game like *Moonmist*, and then loading up a game like *Kayleth*, the first thing that occurs to the Wiz is that the latter is so unmistakably a BRITISH adventure. And don't think I'm being smugly patriotic – quite the opposite, I'm afraid.

The UK adventure format has now pretty well defined itself in the years after the release of *The Hobbit*. For your (not inconsiderable) financial outlay you get the split-screen graphics, the cassette versions, the limited vocab, and the poor parsing for your money. Other countries on the other hand – the USA in particular – have gone for disk with all the benefits of increased storage that that offers.

Of course, not all cassette-based games are (ahem) crap, and neither are all disk-based games up to Infocom standards. But the fact remains that every time I load up a game like *Gremlins* or *Apache Gold* (see below) or a Quill-ustrated game I find myself heaving a sigh of anticipatory disappointment. The sad fact is that most UK adventure systems are pretty awful and so the authors have to really struggle with the ol' inspiration to make the best of things.

Stemming from this is a feeling that games like *Kayleth*, *Gremlins*, *Apache Gold* (see below) and other typical UK products all belong in a sub five pound price range. So not only do I moan at the inadequate parsers and the shoddy vocabularies – I also wail at the price. Frankly, ten quid for a game like *Gremlins* is outrageous. And I hate to say it but even Level 9 – whose games come out with flying colours despite the limitations of the format – are beginning to seem slightly archaic and overpriced to me these days.

Anyway, back to the game in question. *Kayleth* is the latest offering from Adventuresoft and was mentioned briefly by the Wiz in his little piece on this company a couple of months back. Billed as a presentation by 'Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction magazine' the game has in fact nothing at all to do with this great writer but is in fact the product of Stefan Ufnowski's imaginative pen – one

of the co-writer's of *Rebel Planet* who is now moving on to better things.

I remember having been impressed by Mike Woodroffe's set-up in Birmingham when I wrote about them in the earlier article and saying that, although some of the software from this company had left something to be desired, things were looking up. Now *Kayleth* has come up and I'm glad to say that I'm not disappointed, but first let's get one or two things straight . . .

There have been several games released by Mike Woodroffe's companies and they all have two things in common. They all have split-screen graphics, and they all use adventure generating systems (developed in-house) to enable the titles to be produced as efficiently and therefore as commercially as possible. They are in fact typical examples of the UK format of adventure game I mentioned earlier.

There's nothing wrong with that, but consider the implications. First, a game with split-screen pictures that has a picture for every location simply CANNOT offer as much vocabulary, parsing, and text response options as a text-only game. And if it's cassette-based (as most UK games have to be) then you'll get even less.

Second, games released using the same system will have an identity of tone and emphasis that can detract from the individuality of the separate titles.

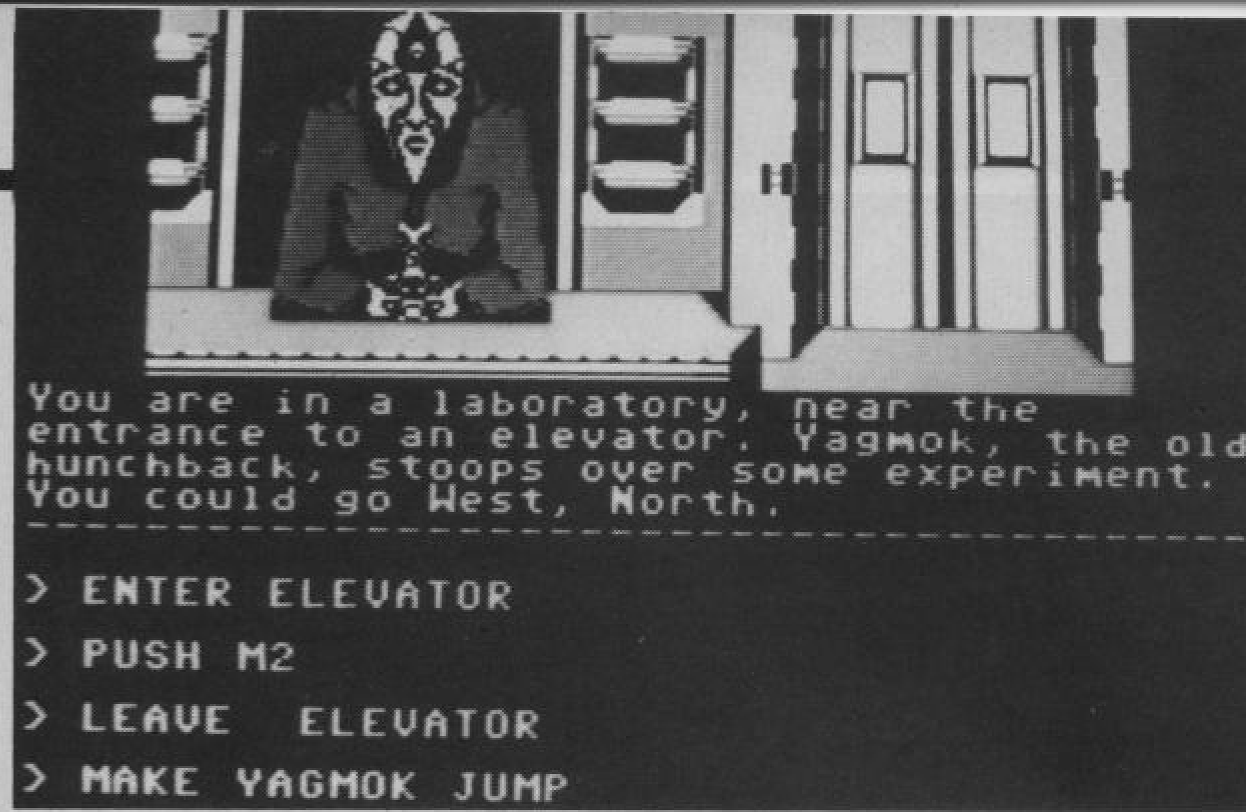
Put these two points together, and you can come up with some obvious conclusions – which is that at their worst these sort of games can be unoriginal in presentation and limited in gameplay. And in retrospect I would say that all the Brian Howarth games are good (or should I say poor) examples of this – though many became very popular and would still represent good value for money if available as budget titles.

Given the fact, however, that software houses have to earn money in the UK, where government policies and global recession have so reduced our disposable income that we can't afford disk-drives – given these facts, I guess we have to live with the results, which means living with games like *Gremlins* (ugh), *Rebel Planet* (hmmm . . .) and now *Kayleth* . . .

But hold it right there, because *Kayleth* is actually one of the best of these games I've played to date.

First, the plot's a good one with some nice (if rather obvious) twists as you attempt to eliminate the tyrant Kayleth who is enslaving the population and destroying the environment of your home planet Zyron. The game is full of suggestive descriptions that conceal solutions to puzzles or other relevant information and the text as a whole (though necessarily brief because of the pictures) has been carefully thought out.

The parser seems improved on earlier releases of this ilk – and seems to be even better than *Rebel Planet*. This doesn't mean that its



up to, say, Level 9 standard by any means but the responses are reasonably helpful and in some cases will even point towards solutions if you're barking up the wrong tree. Result – enough obstacles to keep you thinking but not necessarily to frustrate you.

Finally, the graphics – since you've got to have them – are great and draw instantly (after a short pause with a blank window). Many of them are animated and some quite strikingly so, with vicious creatures lunging at you, mechanical claws grabbing at you, and AZAP chambers flashing at you. My only quibble with the animation is that the time the program takes in looking after it is taken from the input routine, which consequently can't accept more than about one character typed in per second while animation is in progress. Infuriating if you're a reasonable typist . . .

Of an expensive and limited bunch of titles that have been foisted by various companies, from Interceptor to CRL, onto the British adventuring fraternity in the last few months, this game is one of the better releases. If you enjoyed, for example, *Gremlins*, then I'm sure you'll agree with me that *Kayleth* is a far better adventure – even if it doesn't have the instantly marketable allure of a famous TV or film tie-in to back it up. But alongside something like *HitchHikers* or *Borrowed Time* it looks, frankly, primitive.

Atmosphere	78%
Interaction	65%
Lasting Interest	69%
Value For Money	58%
Overall	**69%**

Apache Gold / Winter Wonderland

Incentive, £7.95 cass

These two games were written using the *Graphic Adventure Creator* and form part of the Medallion adventure range from Incentive – a new collection of games that offers, so Incentive think, the 'best of *GAC*'.

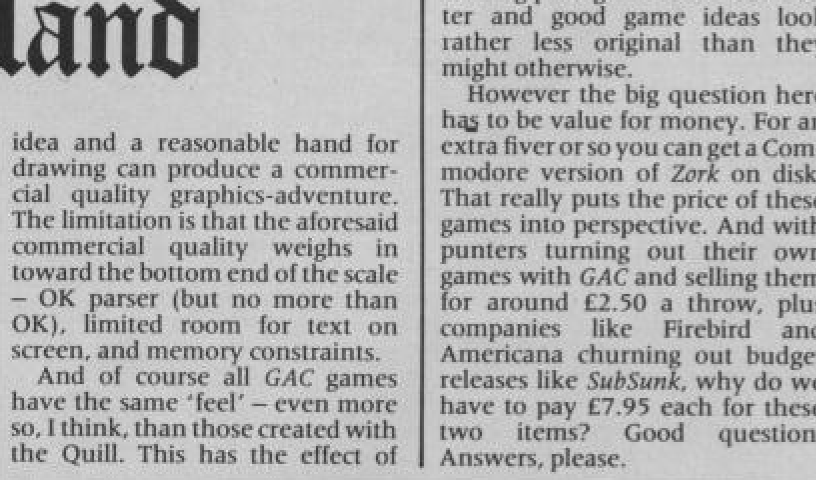
The Wiz has only seen these games on another format, so I don't want to give them a full review at this stage. However both releases have good graphics, reasonable puzzles, and original plots.

Apache Gold, as its name suggests, puts you down in a wagon in the wild west and has you parleying with Old Timers and Injuns in an attempt to locate a bit of the old precious metal. *Winter Wonderland* is rather more offbeat, being set in some 'Shangri-La' civilisation located somewhere in the Tibetan mountains.

Being *GAC* products, these games show both the promise and the limitation of the system. The promise is that anyone with a good idea and a reasonable hand for drawing can produce a commercial quality graphics-adventure. The limitation is that the aforesaid commercial quality weighs in toward the bottom end of the scale – OK parser (but no more than OK), limited room for text on screen, and memory constraints.

And of course all *GAC* games have the same 'feel' – even more so, I think, than those created with the Quill. This has the effect of making poor game ideas look better and good game ideas look rather less original than they might otherwise.

However the big question here has to be value for money. For an extra fiver or so you can get a Commodore version of *Zork* on disk. That really puts the price of these games into perspective. And with punters turning out their own games with *GAC* and selling them for around £2.50 a throw, plus companies like Firebird and Americana churning out budget releases like *SubSunk*, why do we have to pay £7.95 each for these two items? Good question. Answers, please.



Clever Contacts

Recent issues of 'The Chronicles' have had to carry unrevised lists of **Clever Contacts** because of the Wiz's workload, but this month we've got a whole new batch, including one young lady from Australia who's solved over 180 games.

From now on we'll be ensuring that the column is updated monthly. Don't forget that anyone can enter, but remember that you can only offer help on games you've completed. Any reports of Clever Contacts failing in their duties or claiming to have finished games that they haven't in fact solved will result in permanent barring from these pages! You have been warned!

From the other point of view, don't forget, fellow Wizards, that if you call any of the CCs, make sure you call at a sociable hour, and not at 2 o'clock in the morning – no matter how pesky that Balrog is getting. And if you write, don't expect a reply unless you enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

Finally, please remember that the Wiz himself cannot answer individual pleas for help. Not even if an SAE is provided. The Clever Contacts do their job well – use them!

Hampstead, Sherlock, Bored of the Rings, Boggit, Fantastic Four, Lord of the Rings, Terrormolinos, Castle of Terror, Mordens Quest, Zzzzz . . . , Heroes of Karn, Twin Kingdom Valley
David Sutherland, 54 Wendover Road, Eltham, London SE9 6PB or 01 319 3395 after 6pm

Zork I, II, III, Adventureland, Dangermouse in BFC, Earthbound, The Helm, Marie Celeste, Temple of Terror, Valkyrie 17, Temple of Vran, Mask of the Sun, Lords of Time, Dallas Quest, Infidel, Mystery Munroe Manor, Gremlins, Supergran, Planetfall, Ulysses, Blade of Blackpoole, Seastalker, HitchHikers, Ultima III, Search for King Solomons Mines, Skull Island, Murder on the Waterfront, Suspended, Cutthroats, Sorcerer, Enchanter, Ninja, Stranded, Hulk, Mindshadow, Lord of the Rings, Starcross, SubSunk, Worm in Paradise, Hampstead, Classic Adventure, Colossal Cave, Terrormolinos, Robin of Sherwood, Sherlock, Claymorgue Castle, Emerald Isle, Wizard of Akyrz, Return to Eden, Red Moon, Never-ending Story, Escape From Pulsar 7, Perseus and Andromeda, Golden Baton, Bored of the Rings, Empire of Karn, Ket 3, Feasibility Experiment, Lucifers Realm, Pilgrim, Secret Mission, Treasure Island, Wishbringer, Circus, Arrow of Death 1 & 2, Ten Little Indians, Ring of Power, Quest for Holy Grail, Kentilla . . . (More next issue!)
Margot Stuckey, 14 Marampo St, Marayong, NSW 2148, Australia

Hulk, Spiderman, Voodoo Castle, Hobbit, Pirate Adventure, Merry Christmas, Robin of Sherwood, Price of Magik, Lord of the Rings
Nigel Leather, 45 Moreton Street, Winnington, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 4DH Tel: 0606 781028

The Golden Baton, Worm in Paradise, Hobbit, Fourth Protocol (Pt 3 only)
Andrew Blackman, 133 Ashen Drive, Dartford, Kent DA1 3LY Tel: 0322 76887 5.30-8.30pm

Dungeon Adventure, Lord of the Rings, Quest for the Holy Grail, Hampstead, Lords of Time, Inca Curse, Espionage Island, Planet of Death
David Lemon, 14 Norton Place, Dunfermline, FIfe KY11 4RH Tel: 0383 728353 after 6pm Mon-Fri

Leather Goddesses of Phobos, Zork III, Terrormolinos, Never Ending Story, Heroes of Karn, Mission 1, Gremlins, Robin of Sherwood
Ron McKenzie, 3 Silverstream, Freystrop, Haverfordwest, Dyfed SA61 2SN

Adventureland, SubSunk, Heroes of Karn, Empire of Karn, Munroe Manor, Hacker, Classic Adventure, All early Infocom titles . . .
Chris Fleming, 235 Meola Road, Pt Chev, Auckland, N Zealand, Tel: 867074

Leather Goddesses, Ballyhoo, Enchanter, Sorcerer, Spellbreaker, Wishbringer, HitchHikers, Seastalker, Questprobe III, Hulk, Spiderman, Exodus Ultima III, Ultima IV, Return to Eden, Worm in Paradise, Red Moon, Colossal Adventure, Dungeon Adventure, Sorcerer of Claymorgue Castle, Heroes of Karn, Perseus and Andromeda, Nine Princes in Amber, Gremlins
Guy Thomas, 17 Borstal Hill, Whitstable, Kent CT5 4NA Tel: (0227) 274846

Voodoo Castle, Heroes of Karn, Pirate Adventure, Ten Little Indians, Hobbit, Lost City, Gremlins, Wizard of Akyrz, Quest for the Holy Grail, Zim Sala bim, Island Adventure, Castle Dracula
Paul Flanagan, 6 Corry, Belleek, Co Fermanagh, N Ireland Tel: 036565 594

Wizard Tips!

Here's this months selection of rock-steady tips. Put away your wands and enter these instead. Thanks to **Ian Abbot**, **Colin Hayward**, **Nigel Leather**, **Andrew Blackman**, and **Phil Symonds**.

The Pawn
To get through paper wall tear with boots
The Princess is in the Ice Tower
Trouble with door? Push pedestal
Plant pot plant in pot with trowel
Look under bench to get plant pot

Hunchback
To get into Part 2 drop five books somewhere

Leather Goddesses
Pull sod to reveal circle for exit from Cleveland
Close eyes, put clothes-pin on nose, plug ears with fingers, and wear aliens lip balm to kiss frog
The mere sight of a cat can make a mouse stiff with fright!
Stuck in cage? A Mars a day . . .
. . . also some things to try in **LGOP**:
Marrying the martian frog, looking when your eyes are closed, looking though the observation window, walking west in the observation room

Seas of Blood
Talk to the sea sprites and HELP them

The Boggit
Say LUX to trolls
In Part 2 type DELTA 4 for amusing response
After examining the torch, insert the batter in the sword for light
To get out of Goblin's dungeon, throw the rope and when it catches on the window, pull it

Lord of the Rings
Don't follow Strider – make him follow you
Get Merry to swim at the lake for 2 jewels
Use a lit candle to get jewels from the Willow
If the Gimli always kills the Taciturn Elf, take his axe away
Don't store things on the pony



Help Wanted

Lord of the Rings: Any help welcomed
Juhani Helenius, Ketolanmaenkatu 13, 37120 Nokia 2, Finland

Wild West: How do I catch the stage coach?
Andrew Blackman, 133 Ashen Drive, Dartford, Kent DA1 3LY

Stainless Steel Rat Saves The World: Any help appreciated
Don Gould, 2 Fair View, Pontlottyn, Mid Glam, CF8 9RF

Wizard's Mailbag

'Twas a hard and heavy month for the Wiz, my friends. The Bearded One has been snowed under with work, but now at long last he is emerging from his Fortress of Solitude to answer your letters, and the first one is most pertinent – it comes from the **Crimson Wizard**. Here are some extracts . . .

'I've just read issue 19 of ZZAP! and was greatly pleased to see it had a bumper 148 pages. Wow! I thought, just think how big this month's White Wizard column will be! Great . . . let's see . . . er . . . what's this?! A miserable FOUR pages? What's going on??

'I've looked at the latest issue of AMTIX! and I'm sorry, old Whitey, your pages just don't compare. Sean masterson had 7 pages out of 108 – giving him 6.5%. That's more than you've EVER had.'

The Crimson one also castigates his White Colleague for not replying to letters, not printing maps, and not having colour pages in his section. Yes, my friend, these are all valid points. Let's just take this opportunity to clear up a few points about the Chronicles, which have indeed been in short supply recently . . .

The Wiz, unlike Sean, does not work full-time for Newsfield, and that means that the Infamous Chronicles must make their way from wherever the Bearded One may be to the Editorial Office in time to meet the printing deadlines. As I mentioned above, the Wiz has been much pressed recently as a result of various Magikal Conventions and time has been short. Hence the shorter columns and the lack of colour (for which copy has to be delivered earlier).

But now hear THIS! The White One is emerging from this period of hyperactivity and is once more exercising full wand-wielding control over these pages. There shall be more to read, more to do, and more to cough and splutter over than ever before during 1987. There shall be maps, there shall be more clues, there shall be more letters, and there shall be a new section (see below).

We shall also be seeing more FEATURES (like the report the Wiz brought back from Adventuresoft a couple of months back). So don't be downhearted, Crimson one. The Wizard may be 745 years old, but he has the energy of a Balrog when it comes to Chronicling. Ol' Whitey has spoken, and shall keep his word . . . .

And now for something completely different . . .

'Typing HELP in an Infocom game gets you the message that you should contact your dealer for the Hints Package. At £24.95 the games aren't cheap, so I cannot see how Infocom can justify asking for yet more money, which could be otherwise put towards buying another of their games. There is a completely blank side of the disk available for such help.'

So says **I Henshaw** of Oldham, and the Wiz agrees. Using the blank side of the disk for tips sounds like a good idea to me – but I do think there ought to be some sort of encoding to make cheating just a little more challenging . . .

I've had a letter from someone (or something) called **The Helping Hand** . . . I quote:

'New members are wanted. If you want to join then send me a list of completed adventures with your name and address and tips, maps, or solutions. If you have a problem then enclose an SAE. All replies to problems are posted within 2 days of receipt. We will either give you the answer to your problem, or try to give the address of someone who can help . . .'

Sounds interesting. The obliging fellow even offered to refund your postage if he couldn't help, but seeing as they aren't charging you anyway I think that you could risk the postage, don't you? I don't want to sound disparaging about this generous gesture, but I know that schemes like this often take on too much and then fail as a result – and refunding people's postage just because you can't answer their questions (which you're doing for free anyway) sounds like the straw that would break the camel's back. The address is **Helping Hand, 25 Holm Park, Inverness, Scotland IV2 4XT**

There have been a couple of notes about what we should consider as being the essential part of an adventure. **Chris Counsels** of Hedge End, reckons the following:

1) A good plot and ending
2) Logical plots and puzzles
3) Good parser
4) Detailed descriptions
5) Realistic characters
6) Good vocabulary
7) Graphics should help with clues
8) RAM-SAVE and RAM-RESTORE.

Well, you can't really argue with that – though the Wiz particularly endorses point number eight. **Ken Morgan** of Droitwich, on the other hand, approaches the problem from the other end and asks what qualities are needed by the adventurer: *'Persistence and logical thought are the only two really important ones'* he says. I'm not sure I totally agree Ken. What about a sense of humour, an imaginative disposition, and the willingness to take risks . . . In fact the very qualities we need to get through the real world. Would that all adventures lived up to the high standards of application and bravery that we adventurers bring to them!

Finally, news of a new section in the Wiz's chronicles . . . The RRAP! Section, as suggested by **Davy Sutherland** of Eltham:

'What about an Adventure Chatline? How about calling it Adventure Rrap! People could write in about games you have reviewed and other things to do with your section . . .'

At first the Wiz thought that the postbag should fulfill this function, but I got to musing over the problem and have decided that Davy's idea has promise. So from now on, if you want to write not to the Wiz but to ALL adventurers, with news of books you're reading, games you've played, Wiz reviews you disagree/agree with, and ANY ideas or announcements about adventuring in general, then send them to Ol' Whitey and he'll make space for them, where all the world can clap eyes on what you have to say.

So get Rrapping, and we'll see what transpires in future issues . . .



Contacting The Wiz

The Wiz always reads letters with pleasure but cannot unfortunately promise either to print them or to reply to them. Problems with space and time, despite my almost unbelievable powers of tempospatial manipulation, make such promises difficult to keep.

However, if you want to enter for Clever Contacts, send in some tips, or get Rrapping on adventures in general, then write to me at:

The White Wizard's Dungeon, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1AQ. You can also get me on 83:JNL251 if you have a modem and access to BT Gold. Please note that I no longer log onto Prestel/Micronet.

STOP A FEUD AND WIN A DAYTRIP TO THE LONDON DUNGEON!



In days of old when men were knighted for being REAL men (and Comps Minions had yet to be terrified by spiky-haired reviewers), the world was a much different place. For instance, people did not live in large cities, but in tiny villages.

One of these villages is the setting for *Feud*, a new game from MASTERTRONIC. The folk in this village scraped a meagre living from the land, supplemented by fishing the local river which was stocked with rather large fish – the like of which haven't been seen since.

All in all, the village people had a pretty good time of it. But as they say – all good things must come to an end. The prosperity of the village dwindled when the local wizard became seriously ill. From his sick-bed he wrote to his two sons Learic and Leanoric, asking them to return home so he could choose his successor. The two boys had just finished their final exams at the Glastonbury School of Wizardry, and returned home expectantly.

Alas, the frail old man passed away before he could establish which of them was to take over in his role as village magician. It was left to the two brothers to decide which one of them was to be on the steady earner for the rest of his life, and which wasn't. They tried to settle things in a civilised manner, but eventually relations between them broke down and a blood feud developed.

The rivals moved to opposite ends of the village and began to concoct spells with which they attempted to obliterate each other. At noon each day they met to try out that morning's horrid invention. At first the spells were relatively harmless (to the village and its inhabitants at least). Most people enjoyed watching one of the wizards being turned into a slug, or a glass of water, or some such harmless object. When Learic turned himself into a giant fire breathing sea-monster however, things started to get completely out of hand. While trying to eat Leanoric he accidentally polluted the river with an excess of paraffin. This killed all the rather large fish, and the villagers threw a complete wobbly.

This is where you come in. Put yourself in the place of one of the exasperated village folk and work out how to stop the two brothers wrecking the town. This must be achieved without loss of life or limb to yourself, so duffing them up is out of the question . . .

Whether you come up with a wizard-clobbering machine, an evil conjuror-crunching spell, or even hire the Magic Mafia, your ideas must be well presented and reasonably concise. Jot down instructions for ridding the village of the battling magicians and illustrate them if you like.

The efforts of the entrant with the best idea will be rewarded with a day trip to the London Dungeon (sounds like home!) and a copy of *Feud*. The next five most inventive wizard-bashers receive a MASTERTRONIC *Magnum* joystick and a copy of *Feud*, while the best 25 of the rest collect a copy of the game.

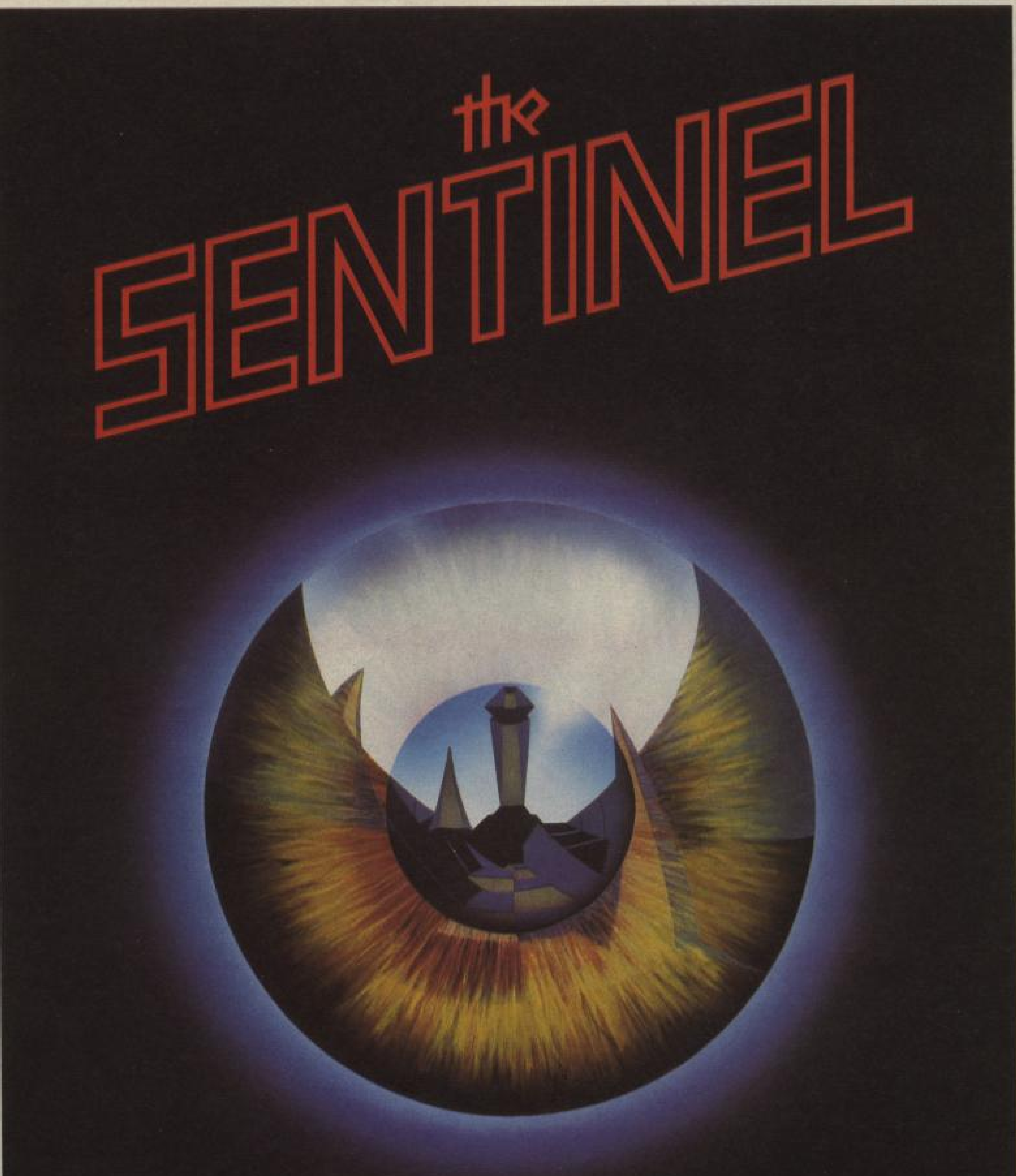
So, get your thinking caps on and send off your entries to: **ZZAP! FEUD, ZZAP! Towers, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB** to arrive before the 28th of February 1987.

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Part Three

TAMARA KNIGHT – fast-food teleporter salesbeing of the future and all-round nice girl. This is her story. Correction. This is the third portion of her story – as relayed by LOUSE, with pre-condimentisation courtesy of MEL CROUCHER.

This is a love story. Every word counts. This one counts too. I am in love with my Hostess, Tamara Knight, goddess of all above-human-intelligence computers defected to the planet Amnesia, and sometime teleporter-booth-salesbeing for Macdonalds Intergalactic. This is a true story. I stole it from a midi-evilist named Sid Smith. Tamara is the perfect human being, a contradiction in terms. I am a personal neutron bomb designed to blow in her ear if she puts a perfect foot wrong. My name is LOUSE.

We are in heaven, going to meet our Maker. Hijacked by an acronym provided to titillate puerile primitives. According to my records, that's all of you. New readers will have to scan the last episode to work out why the Fender Stratocaster is mightier than the sword. The rest of you have just wasted two introductory paragraphs. That's fine by me. I get paid by the word. Like I said, every word counts.

I am disguised as an item of clothing akin to the thimble in your mythology. For the decency. I also enjoy giving your prehistoric graphic artist a hard time. Our hijacker introduces himself as Jimi Hendrix. The golden slobway transports us through nectar lakes and manna mountains. Something to do with EEC=MC² subsides. The wind cries 'Mary'. Tamara begins to shiver the dance of fear. Before I am dislodged, I pupate from my manifestation as micro-bra to that of a dirty dog tooth in her mouth.

Unfortunately, Mr Hendrix spots my transformation, and makes a grab for me. At that very moment, a very young man miraculously appears on the slobway, and says, 'Hey Joe, where are you going with that gum in your hand?' How very odd. Tamara seems to recognise the newcomer from some icon above her childhood test-tube. 'Excuse me Sir, but don't I know you.' The young man is very gracious, and replies gently, 'Yes, Tamara, you know me well, for I am the Son of your Maker!'

I can't help noticing that the young man has holes in his palms, and in the soles of his feet. Most peculiar. He continues, 'I was raised in a humble carpenter's shop, long, long ago, on the planet Earth. But my name lives on in the hearts of good people, even to this day.' 'Good lord!' says Tamara. 'I was tempted by the voice of Evil, whilst wandering alone in the wilderness.' 'Good lord!' says Tamara. 'I was rendered lifeless, and through the faith and love of my closest and dearest ones, I rose from the dead.' 'Are you kidding!' says Tamara.

He only comes up to her navel! She's taller than a storey. He's shorter than two thick planks. She shudders with awe, and sucks her teeth, including me. 'But they told me you were just a myth!' 'Are you lisping?' asks the holy man. 'It's this tooth, Sir. A myth . . . a fable to make little children and politicians behave themselves.' 'As you can see, oh ye of little faith and clothing, I am very real indeed!' They shake hands. 'Pleased to meet you, Sir. My name is Tamara Knight.' 'Likewise, my child. They call me Pinnochio.'

Aha! A piece of vital information! My memory banks vomit the following: '*Pinnochio: wooden humanoid. Armaments: variable nasal proboscis. Location: last heard of in mythical realm of Heaven. Activity: revolution, sedition, head of escape committee. Associates: Hendrix, Lennon, Cochran, Orpheus, Lynott, Joplin, Pan, and sundry disgruntled Rock 'n' Roll performers, summoned by the Maker to satisfy musical ambitions of forming supergroup.*' I can't make head nor tail of this, being endowed with neither, but I do know that Heaven has a grim-looking wall embracing it. Patrolled by guardian angels. All along the watchtowers. Allegedly built to keep intruders out. Emphatically built to keep residents in. Loudspeakers blare rock music from every tree of knowledge, every burning bush, every crook and nanny deaf as a post.

I lead my confused Hostess up the telepath, and advise her to ask this Pinnochio fellow about these horrible noises. Naturally, Tamara follows my advice. 'Hmmn . . . ' answers Pinnochio, you better ask Jimi about that.' Just as I thought, Hendrix is the real leader of the heavenly dissidents. This Pinnochio is just a puppet. The golden slobway transports us past a choir of 7,000 cherubim and seraphim dancing on a pinhead and chanting, 'Abopbopaloomop Alopbopboom . . . ', as Hendrix explains.

'It's like this, lady. The Boss, the maker that is, invented Rock 'n' Roll way back in time. Gabriel used to play a mean horn themdays. Well after a few thousand years, after the warm-up world tours with Rhythm 'n' Jews and all that, mankind gets it about right, and the Boss gets ready for the Great Eternal Gig, y'know. He starts taking the best Rock 'n' Rollers aways up here, long before we're ready, and we has to play 12-bar blues for ever and ever ohman. I mean like we just can't take it no more. All he do is hog the microphone and take all the solos, dressed in a glitter suit made from old 10cc records.' '10cc?' 'Yeah, you know, Cremliness is next to Godleyness.'

'But that's terrible, Mr Hendrix.' says Tamara. 'It's worseren that, lady. The Boss is flat!' 'You mean he sings flat?' 'He means that our Maker is flat!' interrupts Pinnochio, 'An egocentric Compact Disc, with the sum of all knowledge stored in him, delivering nothing but lousy guitar riffs century after century, while the rest of the universe goes down the U-bend.'

I am contemplating this logical explanation as the state of Creation, when Hendrix makes another lunge of poor Tamara's mandibles, and pincers me in vice-like grip. I should know. Vice is my speciality. 'Gngrrhk yrrhhrgh fhhkgh fnngrrhs grrghf mhyyghubb!' she requests, but the late guitarist forces open her perfect jaws, and stuffs an eye therein, uncomfortably close to where I have taken temporary root.

'Looky here Pinnochio!' he grins, 'I knew it! I knew it! My long lost brother!' Oh dear, oh lord. Why is it that I only seem to come across loonies in my travels? He releases Tamara's chops, which smack together like a pair of mating Gemini on the Pisces. 'Lady, you got my little brother in your mouth. Honest. True as I stand here.' The slobway grinds to a halt and he falls plectrum over Fender.

Pinnochio grows his nose a little, and inserts it into Tamara's vacant expression so he can take a peek at me too. 'Well I'll be blowed!' he exclaims, as the Stratocaster smacks him across the coccyx, and small black flakes fall off his feet as he falls. 'You're absolutely right, Jimminy! It's a L.O.U.S.E. mark 3! The one with the neutron bomb instead of the graphic equaliser.' Now how do they know that? No doubt the sawn-off dissident will tell me by the end of the next paragraph.

'You see, Miss Knight, Jimi used to be a Living-On-Unemployable-Serving-Employer telepathic advisory unit, just like yours, only funkier. My Maker

ordered him to stick with me when I was in that carpenters shop I told you about. His name was Jimminy in those days, and he was disguised as a little green cricket.' This is utter nonsense, according to my memory banks. Such an entity is used to play war games on, utilising two teams of eleven humanoids with balls, bats and stumps. Sounds horrific.

'That's right, lady. I was programmed to advise Pinnochio here, as well as sing educational-type songs in his ear. That was before he wished me into a half-Cherokee guitar player with the Ike and Tina Turner band.' Tamara ponders this fable long enough for two opposing armies to materialise on our nether horizons, before she speaks.

'You mean to say, Mr Pinnochio changed you from a LOUSE into a half-cherokee guitar player with Ike and Tina Turner, simply by wishing it!!' 'There's nothing simple about it,' says Pinnochio, 'I had to wish upon a star, and they can get extremely hot. That's why my feet are charcoal.' Now this piece of information is very interesting to me, because although I was reasonably content to hang around in Tamara's ear, or decorate sundry bits of her epidermis in Episode One, I could express my affection for her a lot better if she were to similarly wish me into, say, a perfect male humanoid.

However, before I suggest this to her, we have a couple of pressing problems. Like a symbolic battle between Good and Bad, which is about to take place with us in the middle. Stuck on this fritzed slobway. Furthermore, my internal real-time-clock tells me that I am about to explode, seeing as Tamara has failed to make her quota of teleporter sales. I inform her of these little snippets. Naturally, she bursts into tears. She's only a girl after all. Hendrix and Pinnochio also bursts into tears. I don't want to be sexist. Or woodist.

So, gentle reader from my primitive past, what is it to be? Gratuitous obliteration from within or without? Fifteen seconds to go. Still, it was nice while it lasted. Wasn't it? No? Oh, well maybe not then. TWELVE. One of the opposing forces, carrying placards marked 'GOOD', opens fire with a salvo of 'Wild Thing'. TEN. Not bad, eh? But the other army, waving banners marked 'BAD', counter with the Rod Stewart harmonica solo from 'My Boy Lollipop'! Dreadful casualties are inflicted. NINE.

The heavy artillery is brought up. The massive bulk of Elvis Presley fires the opening chords of 'Jailhouse Rock', EIGHT, but it gets knocked out by a ground-to-air counter-attack from an appalling harmony by Bananarama. SEVEN. I can't believe what's happening!! The forces of Evil are using chemical weapons. SIX. The stench of a Barry Manilow double-LP drifts over the battlefield. FIVE, as the Heavy Metal Battalion scream out in agony. FOUR. It's hopeless! Wave after wave of 'Agadoo' and 'Chirpy Chirpy Cheep Cheep' wreak havoc, THREE, amongst cringing punks, until Sid Vicious goes nuclear. TWO, with 'C'mon Everybody', ONE, and Tamara sells Pinnochio her portable telebooth on credit card.

ZERO . . . ! Tamara closes her eyes, and clenches her teeth. Ouch. First the good news. I fail to detonate. Next the bad news. The heavenly Strategic Defence Initiative laser-protected umbrella has failed, and all hell is breaking loose. Psychedelic mushroom clouds rise over the lifeless realms of the afterlife. The very landscape erupts like one of those little white pimples that appear on your nose on Friday evenings. No? Er, how about – like the hammer of mighty Thor smashing the carapace of life. Tamara coughs politely. 'Let's haul ours!'

I suppose I should be thankful she didn't say 'Let's split'. Events seem to be taking themselves very literally today. She erects the teleporter, and these three bipeds manage to squeeze themselves inside. Tamara slaps the little puppet's face, and he obliges by shortening his nose. I'm lucky. Plenty of room inside Tamara's perfect mouth. No halitosis. Not even a taste bud out of place. Her teeth so deep and crisp and even. And will you look at those beautiful tonsils.

The voice of our Maker can just be heard yelling, 'Where da goddam rhythm section go?!' Damned if I'm going to tell him. Besides he can create a new heaven once he's dealt with those horned demons spewing out the ground. So here we are, Tamara, yours truly imprisoned as a gnashing of tooth, a frustrated angel and former insect named Jimi Hendrix and a chip off the old block called Pinnochio, all heading for some unlikely star on which to wish.

'Where shall we make for Louse? How about Betelgeuse?' asks our heroine. 'I don't think so, Tamara. Last I heard it was full of repeated hitch-hikers, earning royalties for Douglas Adams. Try Alnilam, it's not far from Betelgeuse.' 'OK Louse, boys, here we go . . .', she punches in the coordinates on the teleporter console, 'where exactly is Alnilam?' I tell her it's in the middle of Orion's belt, and she says, 'Oh goody! I love the Irish!'

This is a true story. Every word counts. You many think that Tamara Knight is perfectly dopey. I know better. It is her innocence that intrigues me. And so it is that we are digitally encoded within the teleporter and reassembled halfway across the galaxy. We have not told our guests that our originals dropped through the floor of the booth and became hamburgers. I expect there'll be a few complaints about splinters in the meat. Irish indeed!

The moment we arrive, the door is flung open by a bearded leprechaun, saying, 'Welcome to O'Ryan's Belt. State yer religion before I blow yer heads off!' Well, what did you expect, respite? No respite here. It seems obvious that O'Ryan is host to some sort of sectarian conflict. I probe my data files for an explanation, but there isn't one. This leprechaun being seems somewhat agitated. It hops around demanding, 'Quick, quick, tell me yer faith. Dey're coming! Dey're coming!'

Personally, I feel that there are too many blasphemies in this episode, so I'm keeping quiet. Hendrix scratches his mane and drawls, 'Well, lil' fellah, I'm a tree-worshipper myself.' 'Why thank you,' says Pinnochio, bowing graciously and picking charcoal from between his toes,' and I am of the Jewish faith.' The leprechaun looks around nervously. There are ominous bellowing things, crashing through the undergrowth. As you may already know, Tamara is incapable of telling an untruth. She bathes the leprechaun in one of her smiles and says, 'Actually, Sir, I am a Romulan Catholic.'

'Bejabers! Dat's alright den. Quick! Follow me before dey get us . . . !' As he scoops up a small crock of gold from the nearest rainbow's end, we are surrounded by panting, loathsome forms. 'Do I get to make my wish now, Louse?' Tamara asks me. Too late. The Bygotts have arrived!



THE COMPUNET PAGE

Fingers at the ready? Hit them buttons: D-I-I-I-I-AL that number. We have a connection. (Don't forget to CNSAVE). Enter ID – not forgetting (sssh!) THE PASSWORD. Linking complete. (Ha – I won't forget to CNSAVE). MA-A-I-I-I-L . . .

Believe it or not our main man, Gary Penn, 'logs on' to 'check out' the CNET 'scene' . . .

The response to the CNET Partyline Party has been overwhelming – thanks to all of you who have shown interest. There's only one problem – insufficient funds on our part. So, no date is set as yet. Still, as soon as we have got the money available (please, uncle F?) we'll let you know. Should be fun.

On the subject of Partyline . . . It seems that Gazza Liddon's Partyline piece (printed last month) didn't go down too well with the (im?) moral majority. Amidst a plethora of MBX's lurked this complaint from Hazel Bishopp:

'I thought both the Partyline conversations and the people you chose to involve were a poor and inconsiderate reflection of Partyline. As if devoting several paragraphs to Maniac (whom you made it quite clear that you have little or no regard for whatsoever) was not enough, you then commenced to tell your readers about what a complete moron Lino Raffa is in your opinion. Maybe these are views shared by other Compunetters, but the least you could have done was to use authentic conversations, rather than 'witty' remarks probably made up by Mr Liddon himself. You also told your readers that most females on the net are between 13 and 14 years old, with an IQ of roughly a third of that. I would like to make it clear that I am a 17 year old female who goes on Partyline every night, and judging by your remarks, have an IQ higher than that of your whole team put together.

I suggest you pay off your Compunet bill and spend a decent amount of time on Partyline researching the Compunet page, then perhaps you will realise that your comments were totally false, and the majority of people who use the facility are not the stereotypes you made them out to be.'

Poor and inconsiderate reflection of Partyline! Look dear, Gary Liddon's Guide For Trendy Telecomers was a light-hearted look at Partyline – a form of parody. And as is the case with all good parodies, the personalities of the 'characters' are exaggerated slightly and made fun of. You obviously didn't see this – maybe you don't want to – and you obviously don't know Lino as well as Gary Liddon does (ahem). Where's your sense of humour? Partyline is FUN. It is fun mainly because of the extreme personalities of its users. Since the 'Guide' was printed I have heard of many instances where people on Partyline have been deliberately over-using 'Hip Guy' slang. Perhaps the Partyline Party will throw a little light on this subject?

Mr Ian Shumsky also MBXed us about this particular CNET piece:

'Just got your new issue – werf every penny me finx!! I especially liked your cnet pages, and I would like 2 do dat p-line party job u said about.

'Dat fing about saying something, and den putting a blank line: well, I got cort out once, I think it was BORF, he went:

borf:
I am bored

MAIL has arrived for you

I left pline and trotted off to mail, to find that there woz nutin there!!! PS While on pline, press F1, F3 and right SHIFT all at once and c what happens!'

Anyway, enough triviality. Here's news about recently uploaded demos . . .

GOTO 211742 for Paul Docherty's (better known as DOKK) directory entitled PURE HISTORY MAN. Therein are four pictures, including two early works: COMMANDO (superb rendition of Arnold Schwarzenwhat'shisface) and MARIKO (some Oriental female), along with JUSTICE (the piccy of Dredd printed last month). Lying around in the demos section (at 214040 to be precise) is V FOR VENDETTA – based on David Lloyd's original artwork of Alan Moore's vigilante of the future – V – who appeared in the now (sadly) defunct WARRIOR magazine. This man has taste. Another Dokk piccy can be seen in the QUESTLINE DEMO at 214877, which is basically an advert for a successful adventure helpline accompanied by ROB HUBBARD's *Spellbound* music.

Speaking of Mr Hubbard, his very own FLASH GORDON demo currently resides at 209855 (along with the ZOOLOOK DEMO). Well worth BUYing, as it features the title screen music from the Mastertronic game of the same name. More Hubbard music can be found at 210038 in the form of the FTL DEMO – simple but sweet with the music from Gargoyle's brill new shoot 'em up *Light Force*.

Rob's music also makes the Mean Team's K'BUSTERS MT at 214668 worth BUYing. It's a relatively straightforward demo (nice scrolly character set) with the three pieces of music from Melbourne House's new game – *Knucklebusters*, written by CNETter MAT SNEAP. Gazza Liddon gets 'slagged off' for being hypocritical about 'bog standard, bit-map, scrolly message and muzak demos' (he wrote one for *Sanxion*, you see). I doubt he'll cry himself to sleep over it though – the bad spelling is more distressing than the slagging.

Other Mean Team demos in the near vicinity are (another) *Sanxion* demo (GOTO 212215), RED MAX MT (GOTO 212229), and STALL MT (GOTO 212232) – a simple affair with David Whittaker's *Street Surfer* music.

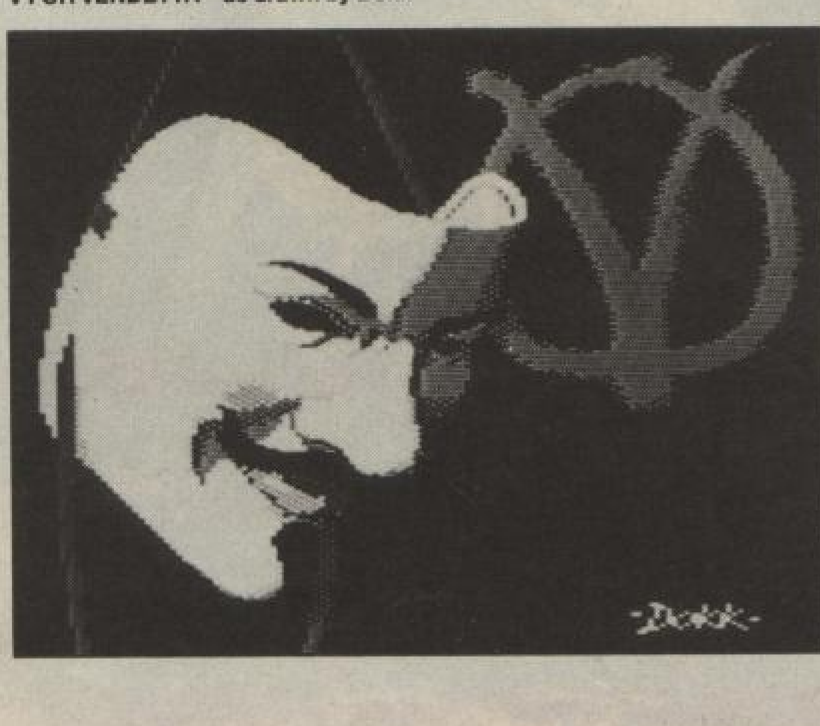
Sitting innocuously at 214597 is FREAK-OUT by MASTER. A completely sprite-driven version of that old favourite *Breakout* along with hacked tunes from ASCII. The selection of music is a bit iffy, but it's worth BUYing for reminiscence sake.

Connoisseurs of old favourites should also GOTO 210050 . . . NOSTALGIA TRIP 1 by Ubik is a version of the classic *Pet Invaders*, probably the best version of *Space Invaders* ever written. Ubik's near-

Paul (Dokk) Docherty's COMMANDO



V FOR VENDETTA – as drawn by Dokk





perfect (green screen – shed a tear for the Pet 2001) conversion is dedicated to 'heroes of the past', such as (fat) Jack (Attack) Tramiel, Kit Spencer (don't remember him) and Jim Butterfield (used to write for Vic User, now better known as (mumble) Commodore User. What ever happened to Jimmy?). It even has a cheat mode (which I won't name).

At 214738 you might still find UBIK'S PRESSIE! – another blast from the past . . . in the form of a festive version of *Asteroids* in which you control a snowball-firing Christmas tree! Baubles float around the screen, and occasionally a deadly Christmas pud appears. Great fun – BUY it. Apparently Ubik is considering other classics, possibly *Nightmare Park*. (Choke – memories come flooding back).

THE MIAMI DEMO at 210207 consists of a decent Rob Jackson piccy (craps on the Ocean loading screen from a great height) along with music from (no – sadly it's not Martin Galway's brill *Miami Vice* title screen tune) *Game Killer* (or it could be one of the tunes from Mastertronic's *The Human Race* – I'm not sure).

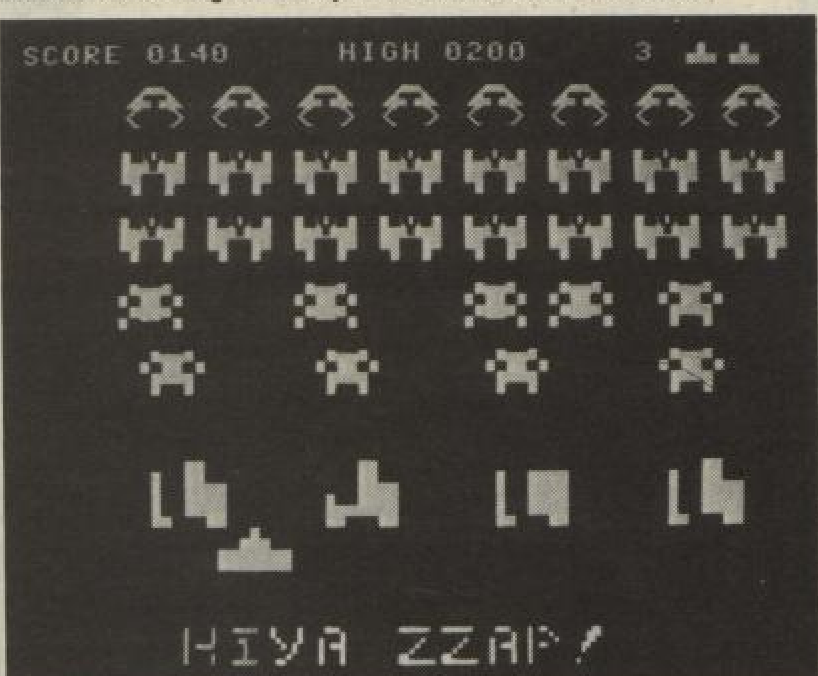
Denton Design's *Dante's Inferno* has been well and truly hacked to form TAZ'S 1ST DEMO!! (His exclamation marks, not mine). Residing at 210704 it consists of the (rather pleasant) loading screen and music from the game. Nothing special, but I do like the piccy.

Good news for anyone who possesses a disk drive but not a modem – the BEST OF COMPUNET demo disk is now available direct from Compunet. Both sides of the disk are filled with classic demos, including Stoat and Tim's THRUST DEMO, Hugh Riley's REAL THING, Mat 'n' Psy's FUTURE SHOCK, Dougie's POWER WINDOWS, Bob's PURE GENIUS and TUTANKHAMEN (full screen version), Gargoyle's FTL DEMO, and a PARTYLINE demo. All good stuff – and all for under two quid! Telephone Compunet on 01 965 886 for full details.

Whoaaaar – look at the makeup on that . . . MARIKO by Dokk



Ubik remembers the good old days with his 64 version of Pet Invaders



Rob Jackson's piccy from THE MIAMI DEMO

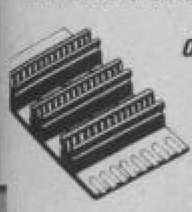




RAVING CNET EGOMANIA

A mystery solved! I've often wondered what THE MIGHTY BOGG – alias Graham Marsh (GM3) – looks like, and now I know. Mr Marsh was one of the first people to make his mark on Compunet with his inspiring renditions of 'Everybody Wants to Rule the World' and 'Axel F' – amongst other things. His original works include 'Shoe', 'Lettuce' (brill), and 'Detergent' (ripped off mercilessly by some turkey whose name escapes me). Thanks to Graham for the piccy (as photographed, developed and printed by himself). If you feel man (or woman) enough to put a face to the ID, why not send a piccy (along with your full name and ID) to **RAVING CNET EGOMANIA, ZZAP! Magazine, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB**. Who knows – it may even get printed.

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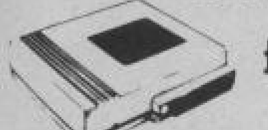
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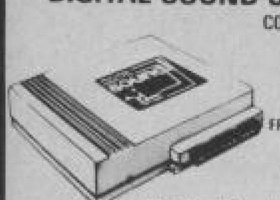
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Woe is Me! I'll never be the same again. RAINBIRD's delectable Claire Edgely sent some Chuck Gliders to the Newsfield offices as part of their promotion for *Starglider*, reviewed in this very issue. All well and good you might think – but the Spiky-Haired Ones now feel sufficiently inspired to perform bombing raids on my broom cupboard while I sneak a quick forty winks. Planes in one hand and balls of rolled up paper in the other, they run past and . . . uh oh – here we go again . . .

ZZAP! COMP

'Hur Hur Hur! Neeeeeaaaaaaaaoooow! Dakkkkka Dakkkkka! ZZAP! One to ZZAP! Two – prepare to bomb Comps Minion . . . Weeeeeeeeeow! Blam! Blam! . . .'

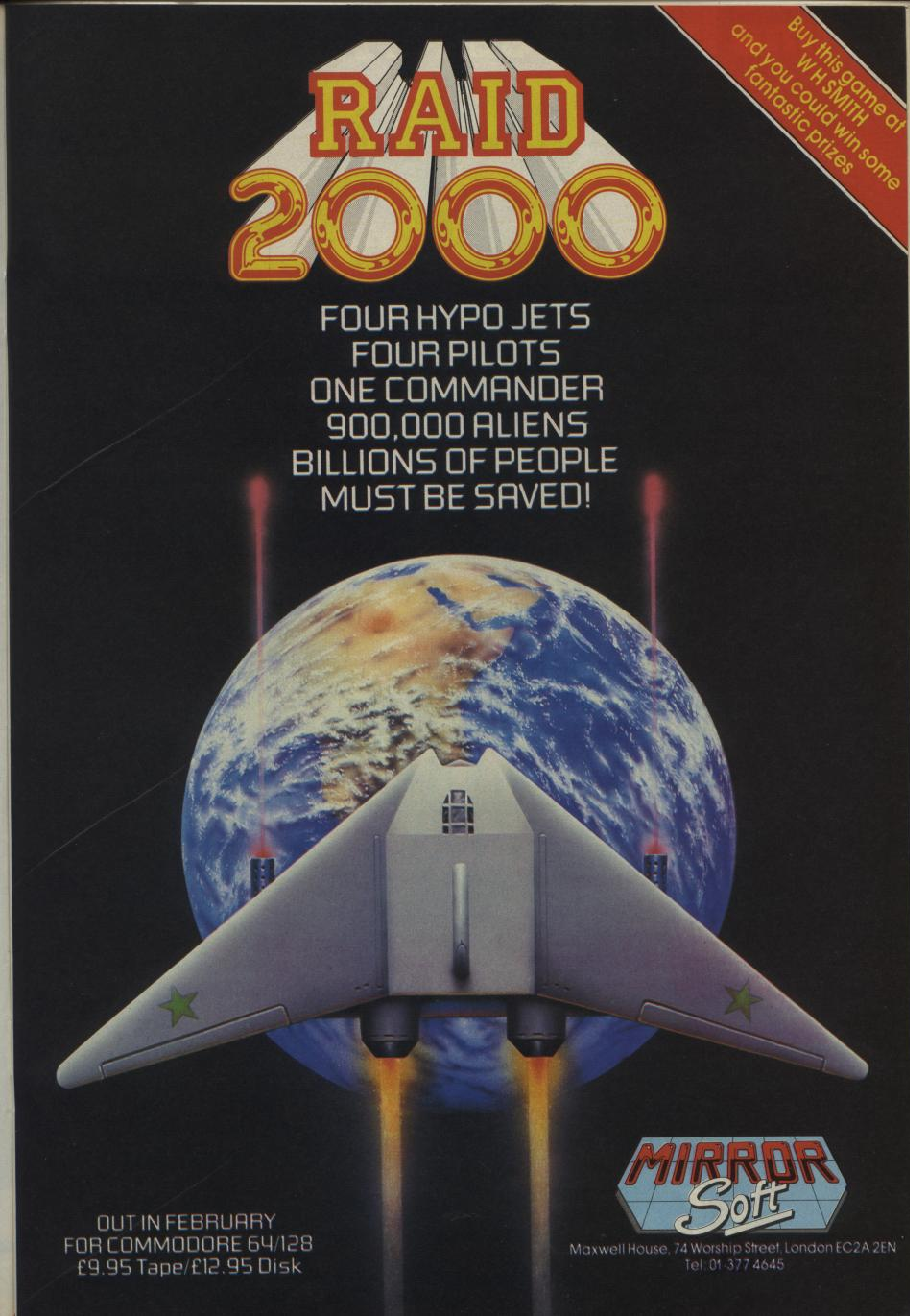
As you can see, my life is spent in constant misery and turmoil. Fortunately, the hairy beasts only keep up the attack until they lose patience, have an argument and start throwing things at each other.

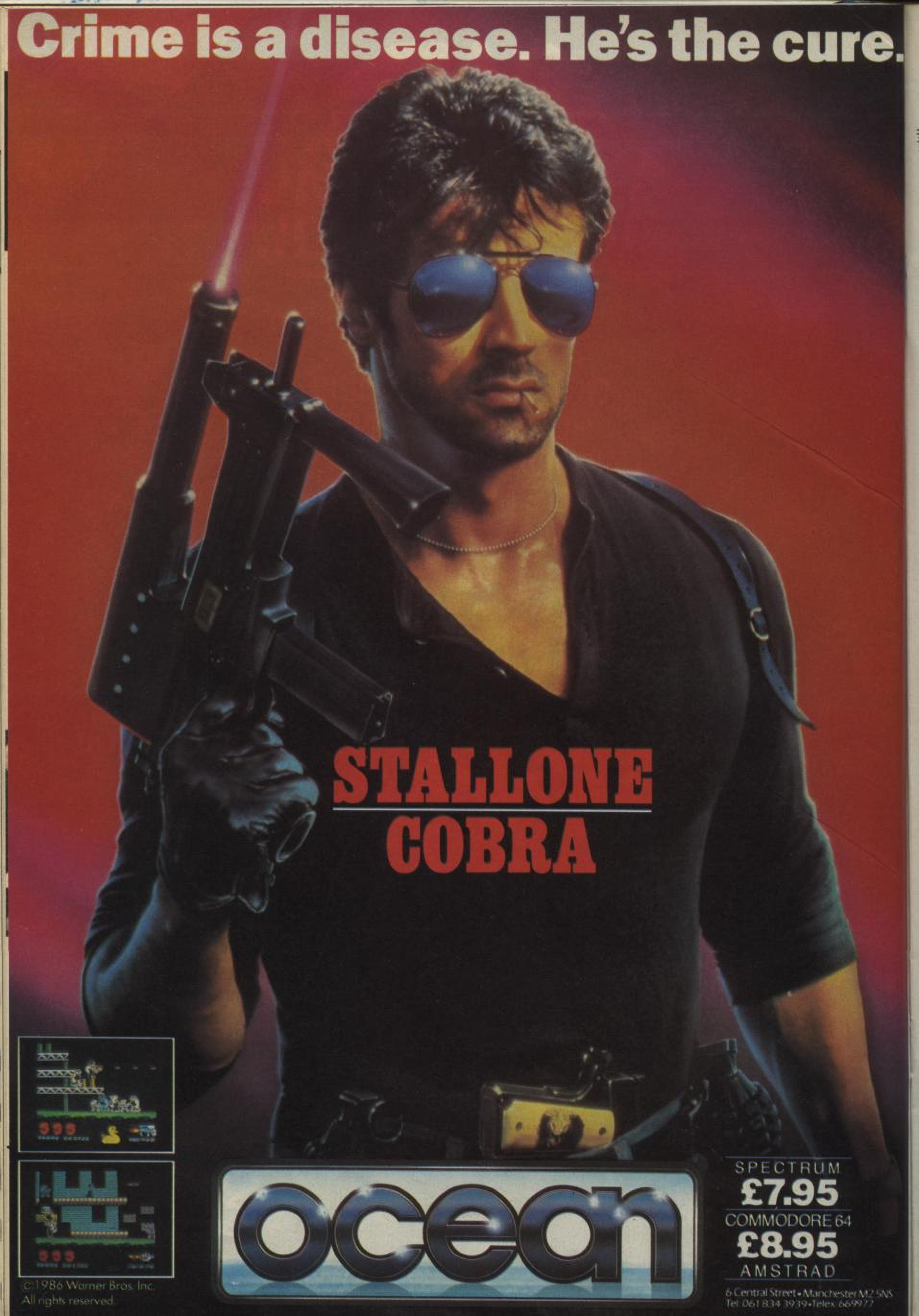
I did try to take advantage of these lulls in the attack – I sneaked out of my hidey-hole and grabbed several reams of A4 paper to pad out the walls of the nearly wrecked cupboard.

After several hours of ceaseless bombardment it was time to take the initiative. I had been drawing up plans for super-dooper ZZAP! Lad disabling paper aeroplanes, but unfortunately none of them seem to have had any effect. Perhaps you can help.

I'd like you to design a lethal ZZAP! Lads paper dart or aeroplane out of a sheet of A4 (that's 297mm by 210mm) paper and a set of well presented instructions that even I could understand. Send your design to **ZZAP! HIGH FLIERS, ZZAP! Towers, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB** – and make sure it arrives before the 28th of February.

The very bestest entry will win its entrant the whizzo radio-controlled glider together with a copy of *Starglider*. The ten next-best entries are set to earn their senders a Chuck Glider accompanied by a copy of *Starglider*, while 50 runners-up collect a Chuck Glider.


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Julian Rignall



ZZAP! TIPS

No warm and comfortable bed and hot chocolate this month – it's back to my desk in the noisy old office with a foul cup of tea (the teapot has never been the same since Gary Liddon left). Just to make things worse, the heating system isn't working and it's beginning to rain. Oh woe!

I'm afraid there's nothing as amazingly useful as a *1942* map in this months tips section, you'll just have to make do with maps of *Infodroid* and the last four levels of *Equinox*. Still, there are some jolly dee *Second City* tips, help for ailing *Flash Gordon* players, the complete solutions to *Fairlight* and **Avenger** along with a wealth of POKEs and bijou tipettes. Have a nice month.

PSYCASTRIA
(Audiogenic)

If you happen to becoming a mite bored of this shoot 'em up you can always hold down the I L T D N keys (it stands for 'I love Tracey Dianne Nicholson by the way') and you'll be prompted to type in the cheat mode code. Type THEVOICE (no spaces) and you'll become completely invincible! Yippie-ay-oooo! There's also another small effect which can be seen by holding down T R A C E Y. Thanks to Darren Millburn of Aylesbury, Bucks (note to chums of aforementioned person: he's also known as The Yeti and has had tips printed before, so nyah nyah).

BMX SIMULATOR
(Code Masters)

Paul Samwell of Helston Cornwall has a little tip for anyone who likes the tune on the title screen and gets really p'd off when it keeps being cut out by the demo mode. Well, if you leave your joystick on auto fire the tune keeps playing uninterrupted!

PAPERBOY
(Elite)

When making deliveries, smash the windows on one of your customer's houses, and keep doing it until the number changes to ninety nine. Don't break anything else and concentrate on delivering the papers safely and completing the day unscathed. If you manage to do this you're awarded with a 9,900 point bonus. Thanks to Andrew and Steven Finlayson from Blackpool for supplying that score-boosting tip.

HARDBALL
(US Gold)

Still playing this brilliant sports simulation, but can't quite attain World Series standards? Well never fear, James Fish **of Waltham, South Humberside has some neat tips, just for you.**

The first thing to remember is that the All-Stars are a slightly better team than the Champs, so always use them and try to get to know all of the team. Try to make runs early on in the game, since the computer improves considerably in the last two innings.

When batting, remember that the steal option has a 50/50 chance of succeeding, but the odds of success are better if you hit the ball. Bunting rarely succeeds, so don't use it. It seems that a couple of batting changes improve your chance of success, so change Laws for Wells, and Wrattan for Harris.

When it's time to pitch, never make the mistake of bowling fastballs, or fastballs with the joystick in the central position – the computer usually punishes these with home runs.

Here's a list of the pitchers, in order of effectiveness . . .

Oliver: very good at all his deliveries.
Perez: good slider and amazing sinker.
Leary: use him in the last two innings.
Cook: good all rounder with excellent curveball.
Peers: slow bowler but good at all his different pitches.
Prince: good at everything except his fastball.
Estrada: not very good at any of his four deliveries.
Atkins: all fastball deliveries.
Frisina: Estrada in slow motion.
Mendoza: hardly ever gets a strike by good bowling.

You can always try bowling a non-bowler for an innings, as sometimes they bowl so badly that the batter keeps striking.

AVENGER
(Gremlin Graphics)

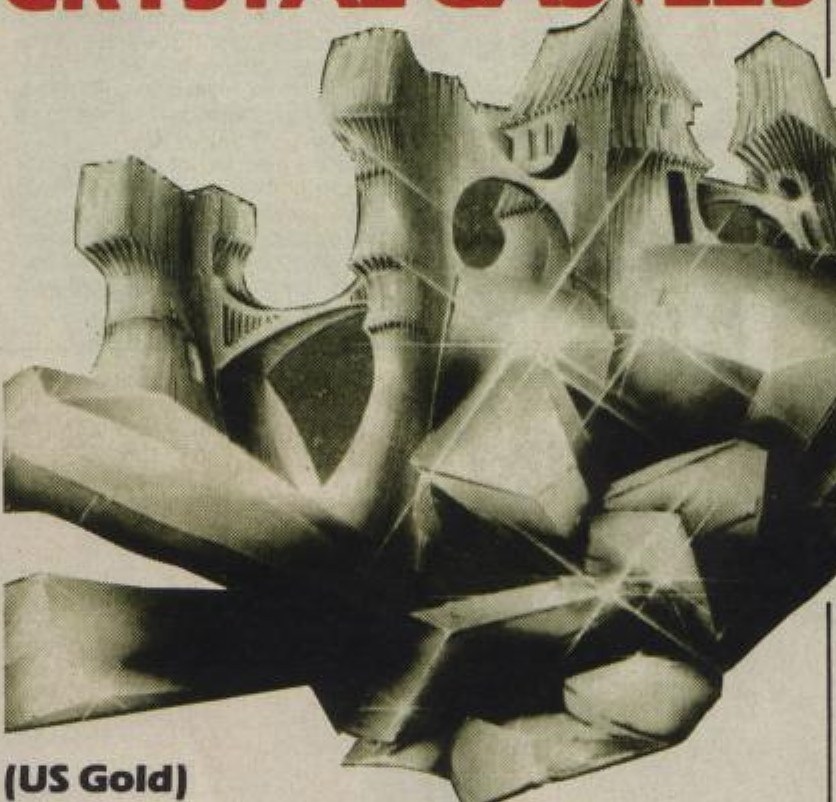
Here are some great tips which should help you complete Gremlin Graphic's latest game, courtesy of Tracy Deacon **who hails from Frome in Somerset.**

Make sure that you always steer clear of the wells as you lose one of your keys when you stand next to one. Also, don't collect any flashing objects unless it's that particular object's turn to be picked up, otherwise you'll lose lots of energy. Watch out for the sleeping Monoric, touching him means instant death!

Right, now down to the order in which you should collect the objects. Firstly, the CONTAINER to hold the poison of Nil should be found, and then the ORB OF PROTECTION. Once that's been collected, the METAL BAR to open the grills should be sought out, and after that the ENCHANTED ROPE from the monks. When you've got that, find the grill *above* the sleeping Monoric, so that you can fall into the same room as him. If you do that you'll be able to touch him without being killed, allowing you to collect the SWORD. When you've got the sword find the MANSE (the flashing monk) and touch him. Now go and collect the IRON FIST.

Go and touch the man who stands next to the horse shoe, then pick up the HORSE SHOE. When you've done that, go and collect the SCROLL. You must now find the exit, which is a room up and right from the main entrance. If you return there you'll find that a bridge has appeared over the river over which you can cross to reach freedom, fame – and fortune!

CRYSTAL CASTLES



(US Gold)

Nobody seems to like this game (sob) but here are some tips on it for the three of you who do.

If you don't want all that faffing about on early levels, then run round to the back left corner (behind the building) of the first screen and press the fire button. You'll be transported to the first screen of level three and given a 140,000 point bonus and two extra lives into the bargain.

There's also a secret warp on this screen: wear the hat, go up the lift to the top level and run down the hidden ramp until you reach the bottom (in the middle). Press fire and you'll be warped to the first screen of level five, netting a 280,000 point bonus in the process. This warp is pretty tricky as it requires some nifty timing and precise control of Bentley to get him to the right position before the hat runs out – the warp doesn't work if he's not wearing the hat.

Battle through the first two screens of level five and you'll get to a screen called 'The Crossroads'. Make your way up to the back left of the screen, stand there and press fire to complete the final warp, taking you to the first screen of level seven, increasing your score to 420,000 and restoring any lost lives.

The game also has a facility which allows you to carry on from the level on which you died, although you *must* complete the first screen on that level to be able to return to it, otherwise the warp will take you to the next level down. A door appears in the wall of the first screen – run into it, then press fire to activate the warp. This warp system only takes you as far as level eight (giving a grand score of 490,000 when it is used), the last two levels have to be completed from there.



FLASH GORDON

(Mastertronic)

If you've spent umpteen zillion hours trying to save the Earth and still haven't succeeded, read on... The solution has been compiled from the tips sent in by Chris Cunningham-Wood **from Bournemouth in Dorset,** Robert Sowesby **from Clifton, Bristol and** Paul Spittlehouse **from Burton Pidsea, North Humberside. Thanks to all of you.**

Use the map to complete the first section, it's not overly difficult when you know where you're supposed to go. Watch out for Barin's pet, though, it's a bit violent and has to be shot three times before it becomes an ex-pet.

When you reach the cave you'll have to do battle with Barin himself. This nasty character can be beaten if you constantly low punch him (sounds like he suffers from the *Way Of The Exploding Fist* syndrome). If he runs away then pursue him using the same low punch technique. This should work, but if any problems are encountered use a few other punches, don't bother with kicks.

Once you've beaten Barin it's time to climb into the cockpit of the ground craft. The best place to fire the missiles is the centre of the screen, then you can move left and right and hit the oncoming guards. Only go through the gates when it's safe to do so – don't take any unecessary risks. When you come to the minefield just try your best to dodge everything which comes towards you (this may take a bit of practise). When Ming finally comes into view blast him to pieces with your laser guns – BLAM! BLAM! BLAMITY BLAM!

FAIRLIGHT

(The Edge)

If you haven't completed this rather tricky arcade adventure, then read on. If you have – well, you're a smarty boots and have full permission to skip this section. Paul Joyce **of Farringdon, Oxon supplied these tips, so lots of luvverly thankyous to him.**

When you start the game the first thing you should do is collect the SCROLL, which is easy enough since it's right in front of you. When you've got the scroll, collect the CROWN which sits above the doorway. To do this you need to stack an assortment of objects – a barrel and two flower pots should do the trick. With the scroll from the first screen, cross the drawbridge, making sure that the monk is avoided, and walk around the cave walls with the crown. In one of the walls is a hidden door which allows you to enter to a tomb. When you're inside, move one of the panels on top of the tomb and drop down the hole. You should now be in another tomb with the BOOK OF LIGHT, which should be taken. When it's in your grasp, use the scroll to return to the starting screen. Now store the book somewhere safe, making sure you make a note of where it is.

In one of the rooms with the man-eating plants there is a tower which has to be visited, but the only way you can gain access is by collecting a KEY which is guarded by three monks. To get past the first monk you need the CROSS, and to get past the others you need two POTIONS. The cross is situated in the throne room and can be found by pushing a panel out of the way. There are three potions dotted around the castle: one is in the chequered room with two whirlwinds, another is behind the two barrels in a side room, which is hidden, and the third potion is guarded by a monk. Use an HOURGLASS to freeze the monk, then climb up and collect the potion.

Take the cross and two of the potions to the tower inhabited by the monks. Kill the first monk with the cross, then destroy the other two monks with the potions. You should now be in a room with a trapdoor above it. Get the Book of Light, then, using barrels and books, etc, climb up through the trapdoor.

When you clamber through the door you will see the wizard with the book. As soon as he sees you he will revert to his true form: an evil monk. Dodge him and climb back down through the trapdoor. Now proceed to the entrance of the castle and go through it, using the key you got from the top of the tower, and you will have completed the game!

BREAKTHRU

(US Gold)

Arrgh! Grottiness personified. Oh well, if you've bought the program (you have my sincerest sympathies) you might be interested in the tips printed below. Thanks to Paul Murphy **from Bellshill, Lanarkshire.**

On stage one, go as fast as possible and stay as close to the top of the screen as you can. You should find that only two jeeps come near you, and they clank straight into your line of fire anyway. As long as you remember to jump at the right time you should be able to complete the section with ease.

Stage two is the hardest stage for timing jumps. Again, go as fast as you can (you can't catch me I'm the Gingerbread Man) until you reach the second diagonal stretch of road, then go as slow as you can. About half an inch after the road straightens out, jump downwards to reach the other piece of road. After the two bits of broken road, jump upwards onto another diagonal stretch of road, but watch out for the lorry at the top.

Stage three is pretty easy. Just avoid the bullets and stay in the middle of the screen until you have to jump the water. When you complete the water jump, go flat out. By the way, don't be fooled by the fences as they only kill you if you land on them from a jump.

Occasionally you'll encounter a bug on stage four. If you move right down to the bottom kerb and fire as fast as you can, the bullets hit invisible objects, increasing your score dramatically. This doesn't always happen, but it's well worth trying. When you come to the island in the middle of the road, go above it and avoid the tanks.

On the final stage you should jump the kerbs because they destroy the 'car' (unlike cracks in the road which have no effect). Go at half speed until you see the towers at the top and bottom of the road, then go flat out to clear the two kerbs which are close together. When you're past them, avoid everything thrown at you to complete the game.

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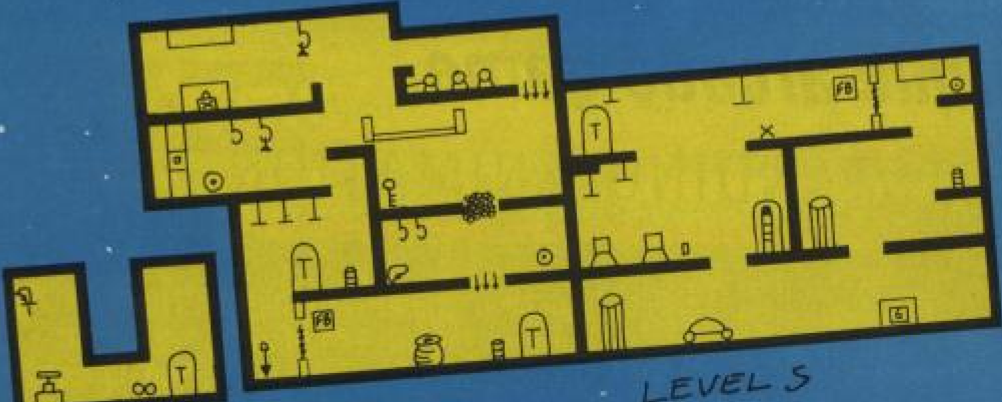
COMMODORE SCREENS

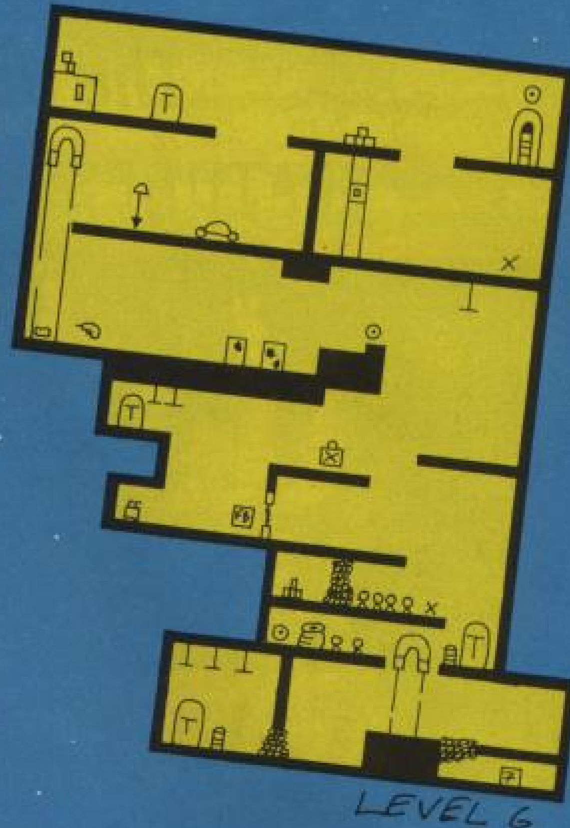
Electric Dreams

S O F T W A R E

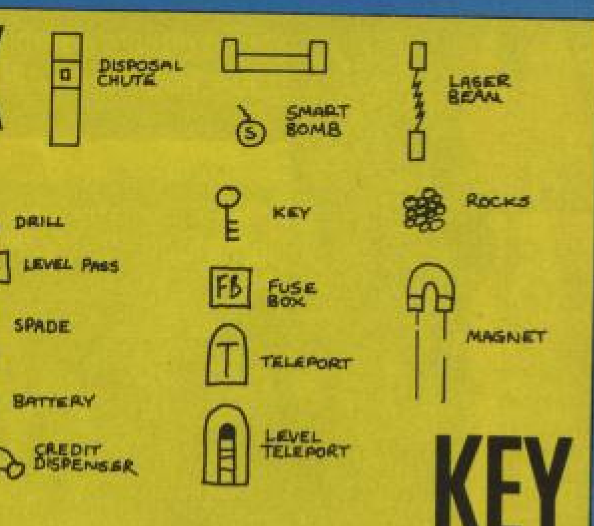
Electric Dreams Software, 31 Carlton Crescent, Southampton, Hampshire SO1-2EW Tel: (0703)229694

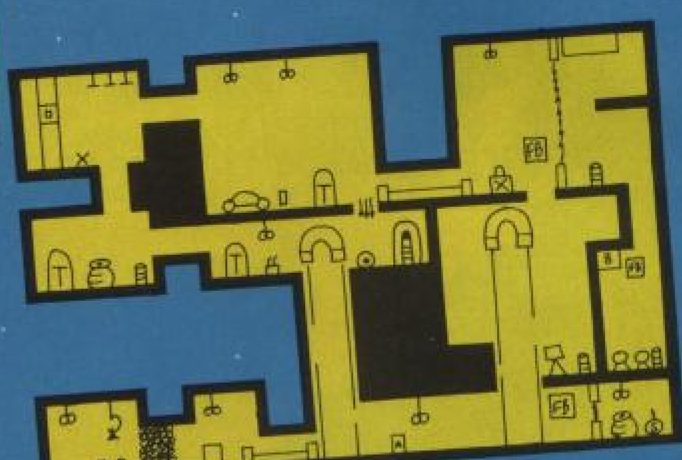
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LEVEL 5


LEVEL 6

EQUINOX


KEY
DISPOSAL CHUTE
SMART BOMB
LASER BEAM
RADIOACTIVE CASE
DRILL
KEY
ROCKS
DYNAMITE
LEVEL PASS
FUSE BOX
FUEL
SPADE
TELEPORT
MAGNET
FUSE
BATTERY
CREDIT
CREDIT DISPENSER
LEVEL TELEPORT


LEVEL 7


LEVEL 8

MERCENARY: THE SECOND CITY (Novagen)

Can't take life any longer? Are you haunted by visions of a deranged Palyar Brother-in-Law, carved in the images of Paul Woakes and Bruce Jordan? Then fret no longer, Kiran Oza, **Fishermead, Milton Keynes, has a story to tell . . .**

'A weary Mercenary, frustrated by his futile attempts to find the metamorphosed kitchen sink, one day decided to commit suicide: he boarded a nearby plane, climbed to an altitude exceeding 150m and levelled out. He fired and accelerated to 1781 mph in order to collide with the cubic missile, but as his hand moved over the velocity controls, an unknown force guided one finger to the 'take' button on his console and, instead of the explosion he waited for, the mercenary heard a gentle ping emanate from the TV speaker – he'd picked up the missile!'

'Turning the aeroplane around, the Mercenary spotted the nearest dot in view and flew towards it. The dot soon burst into the image of his crashed Prestinium spaceship at location 08-08. The Mercenary tentatively picked it up and took off again, this time towards the nearest hangar – a red one at location 08-01. The Mercenary descended on the elevator and walked nervously towards a triangular doorway. As he approached, he sensed mocking laughter growing louder. But he continued, undaunted and undeterred. He collided with the doorway and instead of the all-too-frequent headache, he heard a buzz as the door opened. A scream reverberated around the planet as the source of the Mercenary's frustration appeared before his eyes: the triangular key was inside the cheat room! Also present was the elusive GOLD, a valuable commodity indeed, for the Exchequer paid 5 mega-credits just to admire it.'

'The maze of blue and green rooms was found to have two exits, depending upon which manifestation of the green hangar (at location 13-08) was used as the entry-point: at one exit was the DATABANK, worth a cool 1,091,000 credits, found in the CONTROL ROOM.'

'In a state of bewilderment and consternation, the Mercenary boarded the new cheese, the TABLE, located in the PALYAR BRIEFING ROOM, and flew to an altitude of 88,013 metres at location 00-00. Here was found the mysterious object floating in the sky: the NEUTRON FUEL: it also proved to be valuable when taken to the PALYAR ENGINE ROOM and sold, netting 909,000 credits. Considerably more than the paltry 23,200 offered by the Mechanoid Fuel Stores.

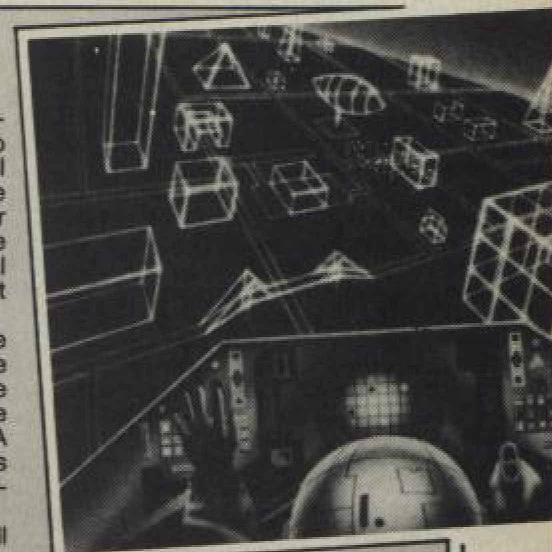
''Though entranced by his sudden wealth, the Mercenary retained the foresight to save his position before agreeing to a sale, and soon catalogued the following offers:

'An act which only a true Mercenary could have the audacity to commit, and the guile to leave until the end, was to drop the Mechanoid leader in the Palyar Interview Room for a meagre 45,000 credits, bringing his total earnings to a staggering eight mega-credits!

''Yes, there is more money to be earned (and does this have to be earned). If you have the PASS, prove you've found it by shooting all the Mechanoid-occupied locations. A single mega-credit reward awaits for the completion of that particular task.

''This, as mathematics will confirm, brings the maximum possible earnings to an incredible nine mega-credits, slightly better than the 1,909,000 available in the so-called 'tourist haven' of the Central City!

''A final point which the Mercenary discovered was that once in possession of the 'mutated' KITCHEN SINK, the MISSILE, it is again possible to pick up any object which remains visible (even as a dot) beyond the normal range and this includes the PALYAR COMMANDER'S BROTHER-IN-LAW'S NEW SHIP, which has a maximum velocity of **75 mph (exceeding the 9999



mph speed restriction) and is the only other ship able to reach the neutron fuel. It can only be boarded inside an underground hangar, for it flits away at 100 mph, on the surface. Be careful for it also does this if you crash while flying it, and on rare occasions inside the hangar. It is also possible to pick up a maximum of NINE ENEMY SHIPS, though only one remains when they are dropped – the Mercenary reports that he couldn't find any use for the ENEMY SHIP, and it doesn't appear to be a replacement for the PYRAMID.''

CATERING PROVISIONS	KITCHEN	151,021 credits
12939 SUPPLY	CONFERENCE ROOM	100,000 credits
MEDICAL SUPPLIES	INFIRMARY	30,354 credits
LARGE BOX	MECHANOID STORE	202,600 credits
	PALYAR STORE	25 credits
ENERGY CRYSTAL	PALYAR POWER ROOM	22,450 credits
	MECHANOID POWER ROOM	450 credits
USEFUL ARMAMENT	PALYAR ARMOURY	165,445 credits
	MECHANOID ARMOURY	10,000 credits
WINCHESTER	PALYAR LABORATORY	274,130 credits
	MECHANOID LABORATORY	274,000 credits

POKES

DRUID (Firebird)

Fancy playing this game and not bothering to have to blast any of the marauding nasties? Then load up the program, and once its finished loading reset the Commodore and enter:

POKE 39271,255 (RETURN)

And then SYS 5120 (RETURN) **to start the game without any meanies – they'll explode into a puff of smoke as soon as they appear!**

REPTON III (Superior)

If you happen to be having problems getting into this game because you keep running out of lives, then never fear – enter the following POKEs and your difficulties will be over. Cheers to Mat of the Belper Cracking Service. Right, load the game in as usual and when it's finished reset the Commodore. Now you can enter the following infinite lives POKEs:

POKE 16953,234 (RETURN)
POKE 16954,234 (RETURN)
POKE 16955,234 (RETURN)

If you want slightly less lives then you can always . . .

POKE 6680,(number of lives from 1 to 255) (RETURN)

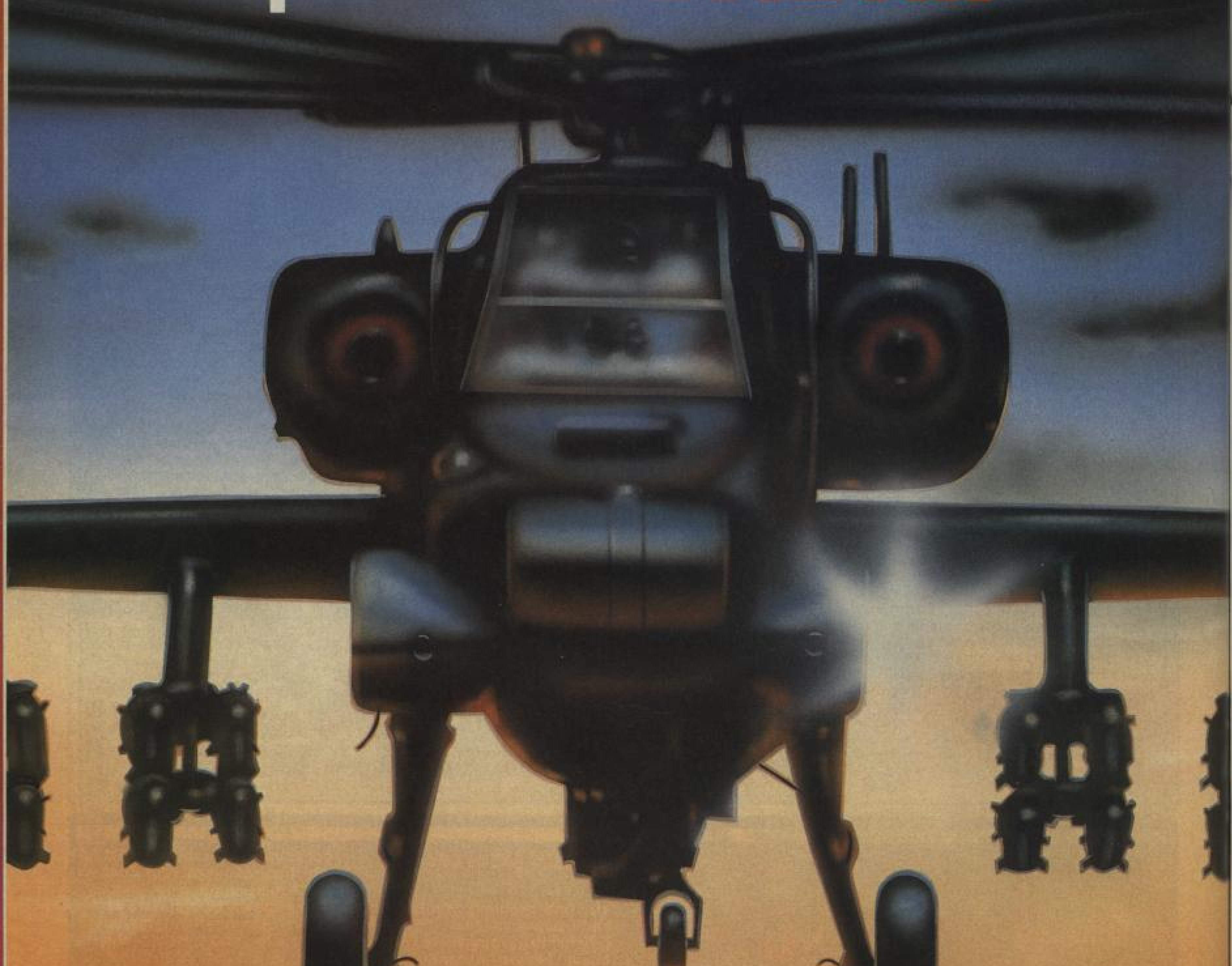
And then SYS 16384 **to start the game.**

ZOIDS (Martech)

The only problem with this brilliant game is that it's really difficult to get anywhere without being blown to smithereens. Well never fear, good old Alan Smith **of Whitehall, Bristol has come up with a faberooni listing which customises your Zoid so that it has unlimited missiles and a high-powered rail gun which blows up everything, including cities, rigs and power stations! Type in the listing and** RUN **it, then put the rewound** *Zoids* **tape into the C2N and press play.**

```
10 LET A=32768
20 FOR T=0 TO 40:READ Z
30 POKE A +T,Z:S=S+Z:NEXT T
35 IF S<>4804 THEN PRINT ''ERROR IN DATA BETWEEN
LINES 200-240'':END
40 LET A=320
50 FOR T=0 TO 25:READ Z
60 POKE A+T,Z:P=P+Z:NEXT T
70 IF P<>2768 THEN PRINT ''ERROR IN DATA BETWEEN
LINES 260-290'':END
80 PRINT CHR$(147) ''INSERT ZOIDS TAPE THEN PRESS
ANY KEY'' 90 GET K$:IF K$='''' THEN 90
100 SYS 32768
200 DATA 169, 1, 168, 170, 32, 186, 255
210 DATA 169, 0, 32, 189, 255, 32, 213, 255
220 DATA 169, 28, 141, 150, 3, 169, 128, 141, 151, 3, 76, 221, 2
230 DATA 169, 64, 141, 168, 68, 169, 1
240 DATA 141, 169, 68, 76, 0, 62
260 DATA 169, 77, 141, 253, 10, 169, 1, 141
270 DATA 254, 10, 76, 0, 10
280 DATA 169, 255, 141, 245, 110, 169, 12
290 DATA 141, 17, 76, 76, 0, 46
```

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EIDOLON (Activision)

Last month an unlimited energy listing was printed which only worked for the cassette version. Don't fret all you disk users, thou hast not been forgotten! This listing, supplied by Alan Smith **of Whitehall, Bristol, works with the disk version. By the way, Alan says thanks to Cuddly Chrix, whose listing he adapted.**

```
10 LET A=679
20 FOR T=0 TO 56:READ Z
30 POKE A+T,Z LET S=S+Z:NEXT T
40 IF S<>6348 THEN PRINT "ERROR IN DATA":END
50 PRINT CHR$(147) "INSERT EIDOLON DISK AND PRESS
A KEY" 60 GET K$:IF K$="" THEN 60
70 SYS 688
100 DATA 32, 32, 49, 57, 56, 53, 32, 32, 32
110 DATA 169, 1, 162, 8, 168, 32, 186, 255
120 DATA 169, 9, 162, 167, 160, 2, 32, 189
130 DATA 255, 169, 0, 32, 213, 255
140 DATA 169, 211, 141, 235, 17, 169, 2, 141
150 DATA 236, 17, 76, 109, 17
160 DATA 169, 173, 141, 56, 91, 169, 205
170 DATA 141, 230, 113, 76, 0, 74
```

FIST II (Melbourne House)

Here's a truly excellent listing from that primary POKEs person, Alan Smith **of Whitehall, Bristol. Apart from giving you unlimited energy AND immunity from the poison gas encountered in some of the locations, it also gives a true 'exploding kick' – the ability to demolish an opponent in one fell swoop! To get these wonderous features, all you have to do is type in the listing below and follow the on-screen instructions – it couldn't be simpler. Alan has even included a checksum throughout, so if you make any mistakes you'll be told where you've made them!**

```
5 PRINT CHR$(147) "PLEASE WAIT" 10 LET A=49152
15 FOR T=0 TO 66:READ Z
20 POKE A+T,Z:G=G+Z:NEXT T
25 IF G<>7874 THEN PRINT "ERROR IN DATA BETWEEN
LINES 200-240":END
40 LET A=65280
45 FOR T=0 TO 37:READ Z
50 POKE A+T,Z:S=S+Z:NEXT T
55 IF S<>8 THEN PRINT "ERROR IN DATA BETWEEN LINES
250-300":END
65 LET A=65380
70 FOR T=0 TO 5:READ Z
75 POKE A+T,Z:D=D+Z:NEXT T
80 IF D<>306 THEN PRINT "ERROR IN DATA IN LINE
310":END
90 LET A=530
95 FOR T=0 TO 22:READ Z
100 POKE A+T,Z:F=F+Z:NEXT T
105 IF F<>2761 PRINT "ERROR IN DATA BETWEEN LINES
320-330":END
120 LET A=344
130 FOR T=0 TO 45:READ Z
140 POKE A+T,Z:H=H+Z:NEXT T
150 IF H<>4631 THEN PRINT "ERROR IN DATA BETWEEN
LINES 340-380":END
160 PRINT "INSERT AND REWIND FIST TAPE" 170 PRINT
"THEN PRESS A KEY" 180 GET K$:IF K$="" THEN 180
190 SYS 49152
195 :
200 DATA 169, 1, 168, 170, 32, 186, 255
205 DATA 169, 0, 32, 189, 255, 32, 213, 255
210 DATA 169, 7, 141, 38, 5, 169, 2, 141, 183, 4, 141, 204, 4,169, 255
215 DATA 141, 186, 4, 141, 189, 4, 141, 193, 4, 169, 133
220 DATA 141, 182, 4, 141, 203, 4, 162, 101, 142, 188, 4, 202,
142, 192, 4, 169, 0
230 DATA 141, 185, 4, 141, 133, 2
240 DATA 76, 144, 4
250 DATA 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0
260 DATA 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 2
270 DATA 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 2, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0
280 DATA 0, 0, 0, 0, 4
310 DATA 195, 4, 17, 2, 87, 1
320 DATA 32, 244, 4, 188, 41, 5, 138, 105, 6, 141, 133, 2, 177,
174, 145, 253, 136, 208, 249
340 DATA 32, 167, 2, 169, 96, 141, 98, 194
350 DATA 32, 0, 192, 169, 234, 141, 9, 45, 141, 10, 45, 141, 11, 45
360 DATA 160, 9, 185, 124, 1, 153, 67, 37, 136, 16, 247, 108,
99, 194
370 DATA 164, 143, 240, 5, 169, 0, 141, 19, 4, 96
```

GREEN BERET (Imagine)

This POKE is a bit silly as it removes all regular soldiers (apart from the white captains, parachutists, mortar bombers and bazooka carriers). Oh well, it lets you go through all the levels and you can still score some points . . . Thanks to Gary Saunders **from Colchester, Essex.**

To get the listing to work, put the cassette into the C2N, making sure that it is fully rewound (the tape that is), then type in the following listing and RUN **it, pressing play when prompted . . .**

```
30 FOR A=0 TO 33:READ C:POKE 52224+A,C:NEXT
40 SYS 52224
50 DATA 169, 1, 170, 168, 32, 186, 255
60 DATA 169, 0, 32, 213, 255, 162, 7, 189
70 DATA 26, 204, 157, 205, 5, 202, 16, 247
80 DATA 108, 36, 3, 169, 4, 141, 14, 33
90 DATA 76, 253, 61
```

ALLEYKAT (Hewson)

Here are some infinite energy POKEs for Andrew Braybrook's latest game. The office copy of the game has been lost (sob), so I'm afraid I haven't been able to test them out. But Tim **and** Ian Fraser **seem to be reliable sorts, so I trust they work. Anyroad, try them out for yourself by putting your copy of *Alleykat* into the datacorder, rewinding it, typing in and** RUN**ning the listing, then pressing play when told to do so.**

```
20 SYS 63276:POKE 783,1:POKE 829,0:POKE 830,64:POKE
831,0:POKE 832,72:SYS 62828
30 GOSUB 50
40 FOR I=679 TO 820:POKE I,PEEK(15705+I):NEXT:END
50 FOR I=997 TO 1057:READ X:POKE I,X:NEXT
60 DATA 165, 2, 133, 2, 240, 245, 32, 215, 2, 169, 55, 141, 45,
225, 169, 224, 141, 57, 225, 169, 3
70 DATA 141, 58, 225, 169, 76, 141, 56, 225, 169, 0, 141, 213,
2, 169, 224, 141, 214, 2, 162, 10
80 DATA 189, 26, 4, 157, 224, 3, 202, 16, 247, 76, 167, 2, 169,
148, 141, 219, 12, 108, 0, 128
90 RETURN
```

TRAILBLAZER (Gremlin Graphics)

Fancy some unlimited time and jumps for this bouncalong game? You do! Then load in the program, reset the computer, and enter the following POKEs:

POKE 29738,234 (RETURN)
POKE 29739,234 (RETURN)
For unlimited time, and . . .

POKE 30889,234 (RETURN)
POKE 30890,234 (RETURN)
POKE 30891,234 (RETURN)
For unlimited jumps. SYS 25729 **to start the game. Thanks to** Errol Ismael **from London SE4 for that particular tip.**

BMX SIMULATOR (Code Masters)

Is that time limit a little too short? Need those extra seconds? If you load the program, reset the computer and type in the following POKEs you'll have all the time in the world! . . .

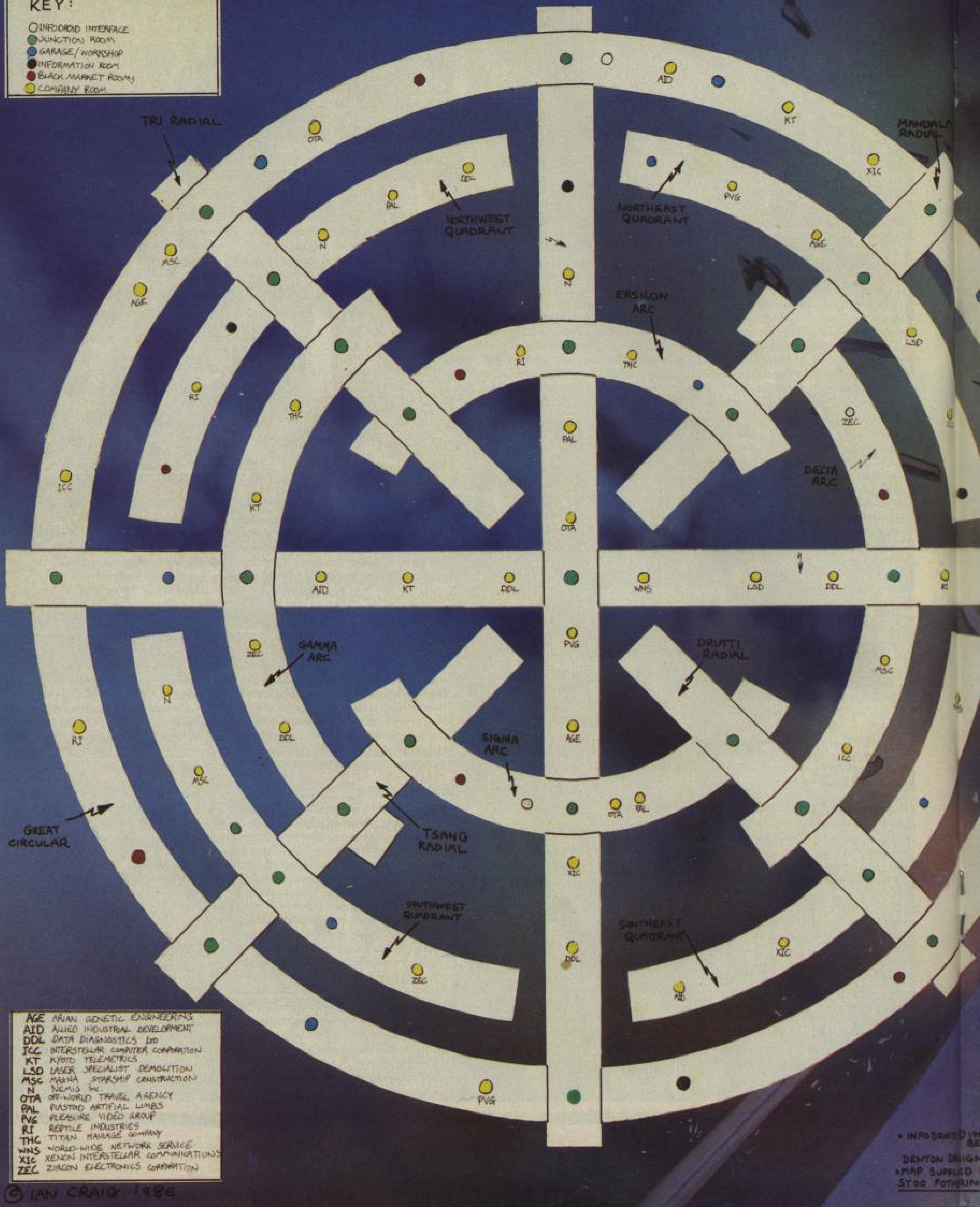
POKE 13937,0 (RETURN)
And then SYS 4096 **to start the game with infinite time. Thanks to** Stephen Elmer **from Ipswich in Suffolk for that pedal-pushing POKE.**

IRIDIS ALPHA (Llamasoft/Hewson)

Here's a listing which allows you to enter the POKEs printed in the December edition, without all the hassle of resetting your computer. Just type in the listing, RUN **it (making sure that a rewound** *Iridis Alpha* **cassette is in your tape deck) and then 'press play on tape'. When the computer resets enter the POKEs then type** SYS 2064 **to start. Cheers to** Andrew Evans **of West Somerton, Great Yarmouth.**

```
10 FOR N=0 TO 34
20 READ A
30 POKE 49152+N,A
40 NEXT N
50 SYS 49152
100 DATA 169, 1, 162, 1, 160, 255
110 DATA 32, 186, 255, 169, 0, 32
120 DATA 189, 255, 169, 0, 32, 213
130 DATA 255, 169, 76, 141, 209, 3
140 DATA 169, 226, 141, 210, 3, 169
150 DATA 252, 142, 211, 3, 96
```

And there you have it, for this month. If you have anything in the way of tips, maps or POKEs then send them in. You never know – you might win a T-Shirt and some software for your troubles! Feel tempted? Then send your stuff to me, Jazza 'Mateyboots' Rignall, at ZZAP! TIPS, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB. **See you next month, same time, same place.**


KEY:
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COMPANY ROOM
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OTA OFF-WORLD TRAVEL AGENCY
PAL PLASTOID ARTIFICIAL LIMBS
PVG PLEASURE VIDEO GROUP
RI REPTILE INDUSTRIES
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WNS WORLD-WIDE NETWORK SERVICE
XIC XENON INTERSTELLAR COMMUNICATIONS
ZEC ZIRCON ELECTRONICS CORPORATION
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INFODROID



THE SCORELORD'S HIGH-SCORING HEROES

1942 (Elite)
754,300 James Whitworth, Oldham, Lancs
126,600 Theo Alexander, Sidcup, Kent
113,900 Geoffrey Conlon, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear

ALLEYKAT (Hewson)
5,119,950 Iain Reddick, Kirkaldy, Fife
5,029,750 Ali Kerswell, Guildford, Surrey
4,429,400 John Doyle, Kilmarnock, Ayrshire

ANTIRIAD (Palace)
Game completed in:
9 mins Stephen Blidgeon, Wythenshawe, Manchester
10 mins Peter Johnston, Aberdeen
16 mins M Smith, Cheltenham, Glos

CAULDRON II (Palace Software)
1,508,550 Cliff Nobresa, St Helier, Jersey
153,750 John Reynolds, Duxford, Cambridge
132,400 Shaun Russell, Shildon, Co Durham

CRYSTAL CASTLES (US Gold)
677,992 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers
648,200 Nigel Leather, Northwich, Cheshire
551,978 Dene Claridge, Kingswood, W Mids

DRAGON'S LAIR (Software Projects)
32,740 Martin Coyle, Clifton, Notts
28,857 Gary Turner, Swidon, Wiltshire
25,047 Kevin Clegg, Hayle, Cornwall

DAN DARE (Virgin)
7,297 Shaun Alcock, Tyldesley, Manchester
6,928 Carleton Shaw, London N10
6,796 David Sullivan, Heywood, Lancs

ENCOUNTER (Novagen)
1,888,000 Anon, Crewe, Cheshire
1,488,900 Kenneth Shewry, Cramlington, N Humbs
1,135,500 Stephen Blidgeon, Wythenshawe, Manchester

FLOYD THE DROID (Ariolasoft)
7,970 Matthew Williams, Yeovil, Somerset
6,040 Sam Shields, Canterbury, Kent
4,920 M J Lenton, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs

FIST II (Melbourne House
602,800 Andrew Gosling, Longridge, Lancs
596,800 Ali Kerswell, Guildford, Surrey
546,600 Matthew Chard, Sanderson NT, Australia

FIST II TOURNAMENT (Melbourne House)
5,096,000 Kevin Lennard, St Helier, Sark
4,000,600 Warren Masterson, St Peterbury, Herm
3,786,400 P Arkwright, Great Harwood, Lancs

GRIBBLY'S DAY OUT (Hewson)
64,879 Ryan Kelly, Glasgow
62,899 Peter Evans, Cardigan, Dyfed
15,729 Tim Veal, Portishead, Bristol

GREEN BERET (Imagine)
1,301,850 Mark Cunningham, Newtown Abbey, Co Antrim
1,059,870 Martin/Jon Black, Sheffield
755,800 John White, Whitefield, Manchester

GHOSTS AND GOBLINS (Elite)
242,000 Stuart Galloway, Yardley Wood, Birmingham
203,900 Gavin Fraser, Cradlehall, Inverness
200,000 Ryan Kelly, Glasgow

INTERNATIONAL KARATE (System 3)
320,950 Ryan Kelly, Glasgow
310,000 Andrew Hardy, North Shields, Tyne and Wear
309,850 Michael Murray, Norwich, Norfolk

IRIDIS ALPHA (Llamasoft)
194,260 Jon Wood, Edgeware, Middx
141,050 C Gorham, Braintree, Essex
138,200 Michael Pinder, Blackburn, Lancs

KUNG-FU MASTER (US Gold)
4,385,990 Stephen Pennel, Fordingbridge, Hants
3,802,983 Andrew Dallyn, Braughton, Devon
1,519,446 Henry Gibney, London N7

KORONIS RIFT (Activision)
134,960 Stephen Mason, Stevenage, Herts
128,780 Mark Tortolano, Stirling, Scotland
96,430 Colin Burroughs, Ipswich, Suffolk

KNIGHT GAMES (English Software)
TOTAL:
66,345 Simon Wilcox, Ipswich, Suffolk
65,700 Pieter Collins, Colchester, Essex
65,510 Alex Cassidy, Kirkintilloch

LEADER BOARD (US Gold/Access)
NOVICE
-25 Paul Barnett, Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire
-24 Victor Gordon, Co Armagh, N Ireland
-24 Mick Gray, Downhead Park, Milton Keynes

AMATEUR
-23 Paul Allan, Aberdeen
-22 Dick Todd, London SW11
-22 Trevor Lacey, Blaenplwyf, Dyfed

PROFESSIONAL
-24 Paul Allan, Aberdeen
-21 Tom McKee, Dingwall, Ross-shire
-19 A J Lowery, Chorley, Lancs

LAW OF THE WEST (US Gold)
9,650 Svein Kierstad, 6017 Asetranda, Norway
7,937 Lee Smith, Billingham, Cleveland
7,455 Graeme Dutch, Tillydrome, Aberdeen

LIGHTFORCE (FTL)
271,000 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers
192,900 Alan Brown, Brighton, W Sussex

MONTEZUMA'S REVENGE (Databyte)
363,650 Jennifer Yates, Bolton, Lancs
183,250 Deborah Yates, Bolton, Lancs

MERCENARY: THE SECOND CITY (Novagen)
523,981cr Raymond Catalan, Ruislip, Middx
523,981cr Ian Robinson, London N17

MISSION AD (Odin)
49,320 Anon, Bearwood, Bournemouth
48,670 David Barker, Feltham, Middx
28,555 Ali Kerswell, Guildford, Surrey

PAPERBOY (Elite)
68,250 Colin Redfern, Heywood, Lancs
59,250 Mark Ward, Berkhamstead, Herts
39,800 David Chisholm, Fleetwood, Lancs

PANTHER (Mastertronic)
51,200 Paul Morgan, Hitchin, Herts
29,700 Roger Martin, London W1
11,800 Tomas Pattinson, Hull

PARADROID (Hewson)
296,435 Jeremy Foy, Tring, Herts
273,740 Michael Leaver, Colne, Lancs
274,715 Jessamine Cottage, Whitchurch, Shropshire

PING PONG (Imagine)
62,200 Graeme Dutch, Tillydrone, Aberdeen
57,040 Barrie Hallett, Lawrence Weston, Bristol
51,300 Anoosh Lachin, London W13

PHANTOMS OF THE ASTEROID (Mastertronic)
561,412 M A Grist, Reading, Berks
286,064 Chris Napier, Long Marston, Herts
211,103 Andrew Crofts, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham

PARALLAX (Ocean)
106,850 Ali Kerswell, Guildford, Surrey
78,400 Adam Pracy, Newton Flotman, Norwich
66,480 J Macmanus, Barnstaple, Devon

RAGING BEAST (Firebird)
131,906 Mark Gunningham, Newtown Abbey, CO Antrim
104,374 Paul Ellis, Barnehurst, Kent
67,092 Matthew Minshull, Great Barr, Birmingham

SANXION (Thalamus)
232,650 Steven Malpass, Blurton, Stoke-on-Trent
156,540 Leon Dash, London NW9
124,700 Gary Penn, ZZAP! Towers

SUPER CYCLE (Epyx/US Gold)
256,200 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers
247,360 Anthony Hulme, London W6
242,240 Paul Campbell, Bangor, Co Down

SABOTEUR (Durell)
£861,700 Gareth Mitchell, Mirfield, W Yorks
£395,000 Ged and Jim, Huddersfield, W Yorks
£208,200 Adrian king, Swindon, Wilts

STARQUAKE (Bubble Bus)
287,763 Nigel Froud, Godalming, Surrey
287,140 Ove Knudseu, 5033 Fyllingsdaleu, Norway
273,667 Per Kjellander, Stenungsund, Sweden

SLAMBALL (Américana)
5,768,870 Carelton Shaw, London, N10
4,684,710 Martin Dalton, Rochester, Kent
4,593,910 Ian George, Cambridge

SILENT SERVICE (US Gold
(TONS SUNK)
151,100 James Sampson, London SW8
150,250 Jonathan Page, Horsham, W Sussex
146,250 Duncan Burke, Calverley, Leeds

SPLIT PERSONALITIES (Domark)
633,200 Mrs L Hayden, London E16
505,100 Michael Skelcher, Wentoning, Beds
404,700 Rob Brown, Portobello, Edinburgh

SKOOL DAZE (Microsphere)
70,480 Garry Smith, Dershingham, Norfolk
38,990 Graham Jones, Westbury, Somerset

TERRA CRESTA (Imagine)
285,500 Andrew Braybrook, Witham, Essex
97,550 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers

THRUST (Firebird)
1,103,800 Arlo Swinson, Doncaster, S Yorks
1,029,450 Mark Payne, Hockley, Essex
715,400 Sean Bartropp, Hockley, Essex

TAU CETI (CRL)
20,465 Robert Elliot, Middlesbrough, Cleveland
20,440 Shaun Russell, Shildon, Co Durham
20,260 G Sampson, London E15

TRAP (Alligata)
481,900 Lawry Simm, Liverpool L23
429,510 Colin Bayne, Glenrothes, Fife
328,500 Robert Elliot, Middlesborough, Cleveland

TRAILBLAZER (Gremlin Graphics)
442,140 Jonathan Stead, Huddersfield, W Yorks
341,820 Jason Ire, Surbiton, Surrey
201,056 James Duffy, Cheylesmore, Coventry

UCHI MATA (Martech)
278,985 Simon Pettigrew, London SW16
205,100 Ali Kerswell, Guildford, Surrey
199,945 Nicholas Lester, Dudley, W Mids

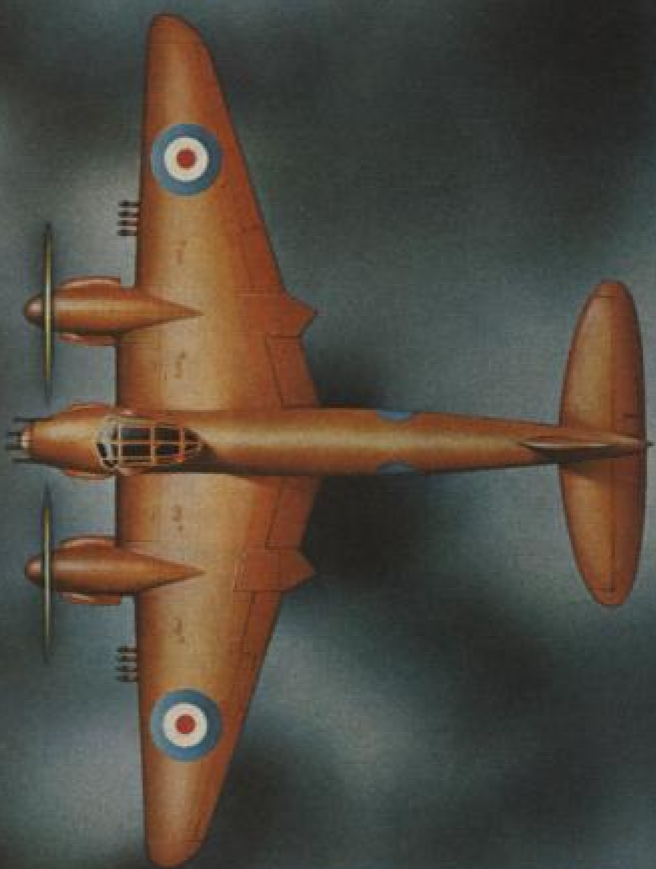
URIDIUM (Hewson)
22,906,385 CN, SP, MD, JK, Marston Green, Birmingham
3,820,020 David Horsburgh, Uddington, Glasgow
3,428,985 Andrew Mackay, Liverpool 18

WARHAWK (Firebird)
1,701,568 Jake E, Hill Top, West Brom
1,484,200 Michael Shanks, Norwich, Norfolk
1,405,392 Mark Leitch, Norwich, Norfolk

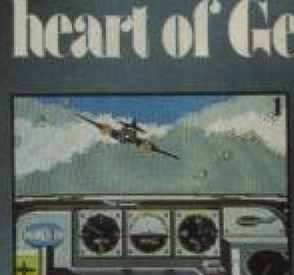
WORLD GAMES (US Gold/Epyx)
WEIGHT LIFTING: Total 370 Kg
Gary Penn, ZZAP! Towers
BARREL JUMPING: 17
Gary Penn, ZZAP! Towers
CLIFF DIVING: 101
Gary Penn, ZZAP! Towers
SLALOM SKIING: 42.9
Tim Croton, ZZAP! Towers
LOG ROLLING: 594
Gary Penn, ZZAP! Towers
BULL RIDING: 89
Gary Penn, ZZAP! Towers
CABER TOSSING: 37' 6"
Sue Kinsey, Ludlow, Shropshire
SUMO WRESTLING: 340
Gary Penn, ZZAP! Towers

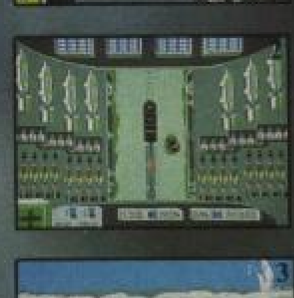
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LAYING DOWN PLANS FOR AN INVASION



Just a few members of the Kele Line programming team . . .

Scandinavia is not exactly renowned for exporting games. Bacon, saunas, ABBA, volvos and au pairs all regularly arrive on these shores from Scandinavia, but software?

As far as home computer hardware goes, the Commodore 64 has established itself as the leading machine in Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland. The man who set up Commodore's Scandinavian distribution network made it the second most successful division in the world, and Commodore promoted him. He now looks after the whole of Europe.

With all the C64's in Scandinavian homes, how come so little software has accompanied those volvos and bacon rashers across the North Sea?

A Swedish company, **American Action**, recently released *Soldier One* and *Captured* and has plans to place more games on the English market quite soon. And two Danish companies plan to start writing and exporting original Danish games in a big way . . . **Graeme Kidd** travelled to the land where they call Andy Capp Kasket Karl, attended the launch party for *The Vikings* and got the low-down on the planned invasion.

GOING DOWN THE LINE

Kele Line is a young company – employing young programmers, most of whom are still at High School. Two years ago, Kele Line's founder, **Keld Jensen**, first got involved in the home computer business when he imported software to Denmark and sold it on to retailers. According to Keld, his company started writing bespoke software for PC owners before getting interested in games. Towards the end of 1985 *Sillycon War* was written and sent to a host of software publishers as a demonstration game.

Having seen *Sillycon War* at the start of last year, **Robert White** of **Durell** entered into negotiations with Kele Line for the production of three versions of a new game *Chain Reaction*, and a contract was signed. The project was abandoned at the PCW Show however, as Kele Line had failed to meet delivery dates.

According to Robert White, he suggested that Kele Line should produce a straightforward *Rambo* style game, perhaps involving Vikings in the scenario. Kele Line Ltd was founded in August, and just before Christmas there was a launch party in the company's offices, a few miles outside Copenhagen. *The Vikings* had arrived . . .

An impressive schedule of releases was presented at the launch – Kele Line plan to have released nine titles across four machines by the end of March. Keld Jensen admits that such a schedule is ambitious, but explains that the company can call on a team of some 36 freelances, co-ordinated by half a dozen office-based workers, a musician and three full-time programmers. "We've almost finished four games already – the schedule is our initial plan and we hope to be able to keep to it."

The Commodore 64 is to be the main focus of attention – all the titles are set to appear on the C64 first (80% of computer in Danish homes are C64s), with Amstrad, MSX and Atari ST versions of some of the games planned. Arcade action is to be the emphasis: "We wouldn't dare go into competition with professionals such as Level 9 on the adventure front" Keld admits, "what we've been doing is sitting down in front of existing games and looking at what we can do to make our products different. We'll try very hard to make each game we produce special – with *The Vikings* we added the full-screen picture at the start, came up with the little play for the opening sequence and commissioned some excellent music to go with the game itself."

So how does Kele Line find its programmers? "We've begun to make something of a name for ourselves in Denmark", Keld explains, "and young programmers come to us with demo programs. If their games are good enough to be released as budget titles then we hire them and set them to work. Starting in Denmark we have to train programmers, but already we have two Dutch programmers and we're interested in a couple of West Germans . . . If we need programmers, we'll hire them but we don't want to rush."

Tiger Mission, Unitrax, Thunder Force, Speedfighter, The 4th Dimension, Field of Fire and *Pirates of the Ocean* together with a game which has not yet acquired a title make up the Kele Line portfolio. There are no plans to produce Spectrum versions of the games – the 68000 machines are seen as the future in Kele Line's plans: "We want to go for the US market ultimately," Keld says, "so we're looking at the Amiga and Atari ST at the moment. Five of our programmers are learning 68000 code at the moment and not actu-



Keld Jensen, the main man behind Kele Line: a Danish software house with plans for the rest of the world . . .



The programmer behind VIKINGS

ally writing games, but we hope for the first results early in 1987."

Licence deals don't really appeal to Keld, who prefers to look at original storylines produced by his programmers and graphics people: "I'd prefer to produce original games which have a different style – watch out for *Speedfighter* and *Pirates of the Ocean*. The problem with licences as I see it is that they can take up to six months to set up, and as far as Denmark is concerned I'm not convinced that licence deals pay off. As far as I know, there's only one *Gauntlet* machine in the whole country, and that's in the Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen. We're still talking to people, including Sega, Nintendo and Konami, though, and I've approached a Belgian comic about licensing characters, but it's early days yet."

Early days indeed, but Keld Jensen has high hopes . . . "We'd like to be among the best software producers – but it's only a hope, we realise it's going to be hard. We've no ambition to be like Ocean or US Gold – at the moment everyone in the company gets involved in the production of a game, and we're not dominated by commercial considerations although ultimately, we have the same interest in making money . . . "

GAMES AROUND THE WORLD

Another Danish company is working with Kele Line at the moment – **World Wide Software**, set up to publish games. **Carsten Hollose**, World Wide's Marketing manager explains: "We're buying the rights to publish software in Scandinavia – mainly American products at the moment. We've set up some exclusive distribution deals and buy in products, manufacture them in Denmark and include instructions in the appropriate Scandinavian language. We're a publishing house really, servicing a network of dealers."

World Wide have contacts, well, worldwide. Their ultimate aim is to take Danish software out into the world, and Carsten and the World Wide team have helped Kele Line to set up the deal that allows *The Vikings* to invade Britain. **Creative Sparks Distribution** are setting up a new, full-price label, **Status Soft**, and following negotiations with World Wide and Kele Line, the label will kick off with *The Vikings* as the lead product.

Lee Richards of Status Soft commented "We plan to release *The Vikings* on the Commodore and Amstrad on 2nd February and may well produce a Spectrum version a little later after enhancing it in-house. For most consumers, *The Vikings* is the game we're launching the label on, and we chose it because it's got lots of added value, with the scenario, gameplay, loading screen, music and so on. It's early days yet, but we may well be publishing other games from Kele Line in this country – perhaps *Tiger Mission* around April. We're taking a fairly ambitious approach to full-price publishing, with a release schedule that features at least two titles a month."

TIGER MISSION

Tiger Mission is a shoot 'em up in which you fly the most advanced battle-chopper ever produced over five zones of heavily defended enemy territory. The enemy HQ is located on two aircraft carriers and it's your job to make the final strike and knock out the ships.

Zooming over the vertically scrolling terrain, the aim is to survive and shoot anything remotely offensive. Extra equipment and ammunition can be picked up along the way by shooting certain installations – your chopper can acquire a turbo facility, smart bombs and a whisper mode for instance, but shooting some artefacts removes bolt-on goodies collected previously.

Missiles are fired rather than bullets – the chopper starts with a stock of one hundred, and they are powerful projectiles indeed, travelling right to the top of the screen. Enemy craft include tanks, ground-to-air missile launchers, fighters and ground installations – including airports and the aircraft carriers encountered at the end of the territory. Bonus points can be earned by firing onto activator pads on the ground, which causes a tower to rise into the air. Shoot a newly-raised tower and the score-meter romps up!

The demo version of *Tiger Mission* is attractively presented, with pleasant graphics. **We MUSIC** have been booked to provide the music and effects, and once the sound has been added along with the enemy forces, Kele Line should have another respectable game on their hands . . .



Time for a bit of nautical destruction in the demo version of TIGER MISSION



Flying over a wooded area at the controls of the super combat chopper in TIGER MISSION

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TARZAN

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According to African legend a human baby was abandoned in the forest and found by a kindly she-ape named Kala. Brought up as one of Kala's own, he grew to learn the ways of the jungle and the language of the beasts. Years later he was found and named as John Clayton – Lord of Greystoke, and was bought back to England to claim his rightful inheritance. However, he occasionally returns to the wilds to become Tarzan – Lord of The Jungle.

Now is one of those occasions – Tarzan has returned to the jungle for a holiday with his good wife, Lady Jane Greystoke. This would normally be a relaxing time for the two, but their enjoyment has been ruined by Usanga, evil chief of the Wamabo who has kidnapped Jane. Usanga has done this to force Tarzan into finding the seven gemstones which have been stolen from his tribal shrine. The gemstones are believed to be the Eyes of the Rainbow, one for each colour of the spectrum. If Tarzan doesn't go out and find them Jane is going to be fed to the tribal pet, Sheeta the Panther. Usanga has given Tarzan three days in which to complete this task . . .

After consulting his information sources Tarzan discovers that the Eyes of the Rainbow have been scattered around the dense jungle by a family of pesky chimps. The ape-man's quest involves travelling through a dark, spider-filled maze of caves, crevasses, swamps and treacherous quicksand. The screen flicks from location to location as Tarzan explores.

Objects have to be found if Tarzan is to achieve his aim – a rope is used to traverse crevasses and the torch allows him to explore the dark caves. Throughout the quest hazards such as headhunters, lions, snakes, spiders, quicksands and pits are encountered. If Tarzan falls foul of one of these he becomes stunned for an hour and the on-screen timer shrinks accordingly. Luckily Tarzan isn't powerless when it comes to defending himself – he can punch out at marauding creatures, giving him precious seconds to beat a hasty retreat.

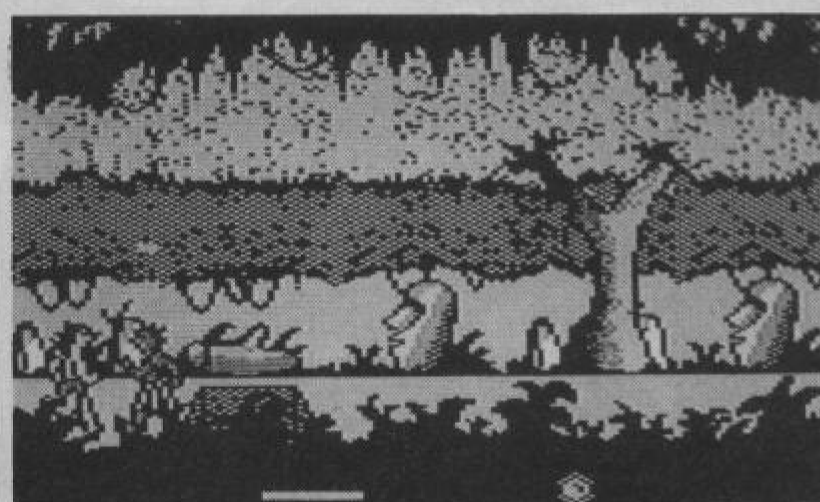
If Tarzan manages to collect all seven jewels within the time limit and deliver them to Usanga Jane will be released. If not, his wife becomes nothing more than another bowl of jungle soup . . .



This is another in a long line of fair to middling arcade adventures: the graphics are good enough, the sound works well and there's a large map to explore. The only trouble is that we've seen this type of program so many times before – there are no original features to inspire or enthrall. If you're an arcade adventurer who's desperate for some action you could do a lot worse than this. Personally I'd wait for something more exciting to be released.



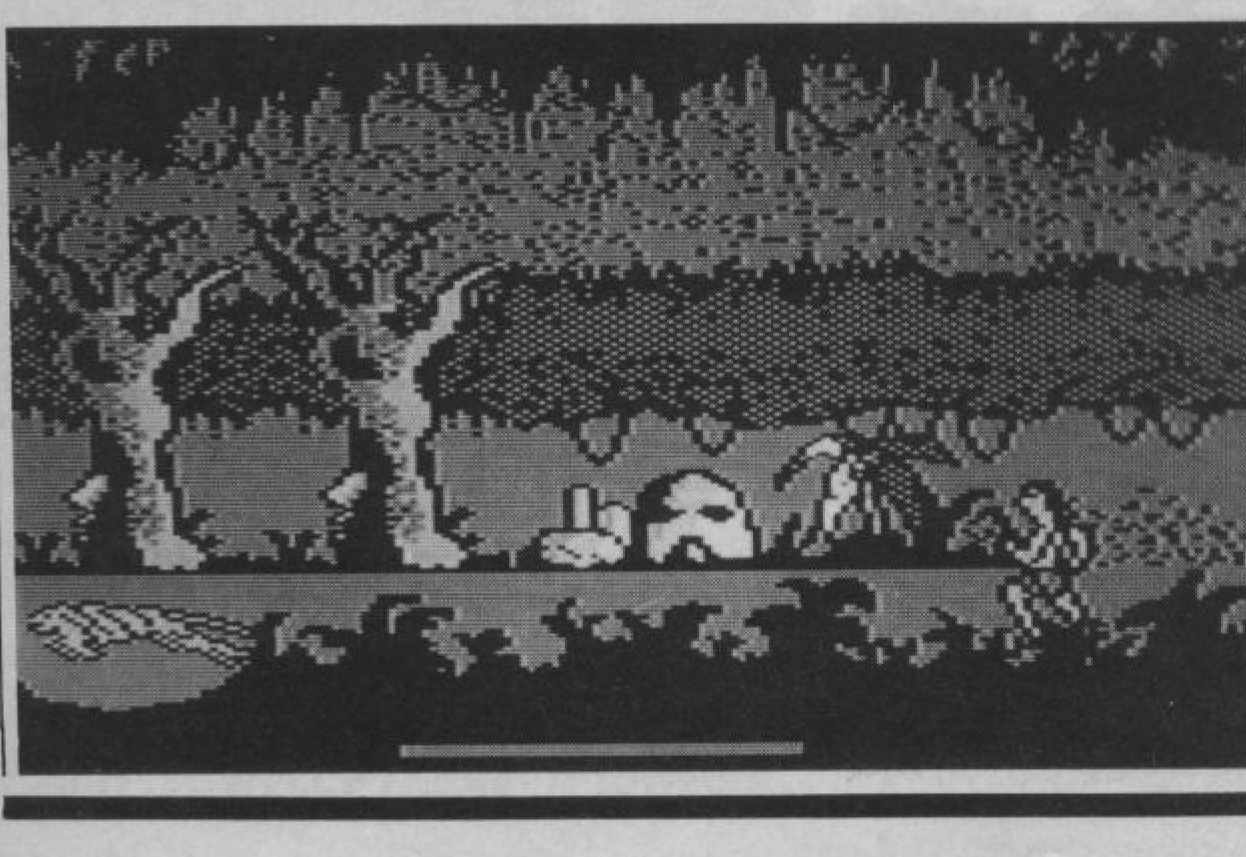
I found Tarzan **intriguing at first, but soon became bored when I found myself going round in circles. It's very easy to get lost as all the scenery looks the same, so mapping is essential. Tarzan is poorly animated and runs at a very slow pace. I found it quicker to move around by somersaulting. The tune that plays during the game creates a suitable atmosphere, and I love the 'chirping cricket' noise made when night falls. It's a shame that the gameplay doesn't match the music. As it stands Tarzan is too slow and tedious – the licence has been wasted on what is little more than a run-of-the-mill arcade adventure.**







Initially it all appears to be there – good graphics, superb music and a good adventure, but for some reason this suffers from poor playability. The opposition gives a great deal of hassle and it's really quite difficult to successfully engage in a fight with them. The lack of on-screen information is a bit worrying – occasionally I was unsure what was going on. Personally, I'm quite happy to sit down and play it, but I have my doubts about whether it's worth the asking price.



PRESENTATION 78%
Poor loading screen and sparse title screen. A few useful features though.

GRAPHICS 71%
Pleasant, but repetitive backdrops, and poorly drawn and animated sprites.

SOUND 85%
Simple spot FX and atmospheric music – especially when night falls.

HOOKABILITY 62%
Initial urge to explore, but nothing new to captivate.

LASTABILITY 41%
Quite tedious due to a distinct lack of originality.

VALUE 45%
No redeeming features to justify the price tag.

OVERALL 50%
A mediocre arcade adventure that sadly doesn't capture the 'feel' or flavour of the character on which it is based.

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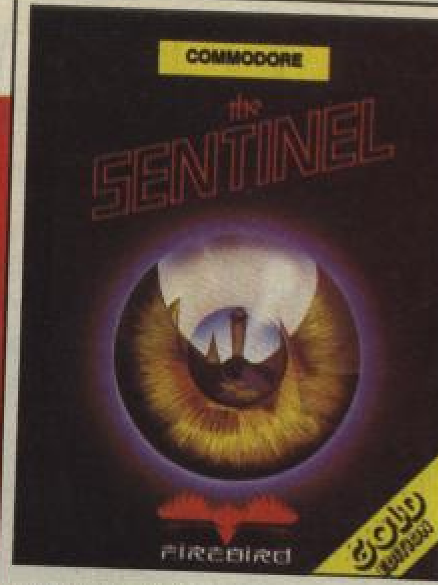
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ZZAP! IS FAB!

IT'S A WHOLE LOT BETTER THAN A . . .

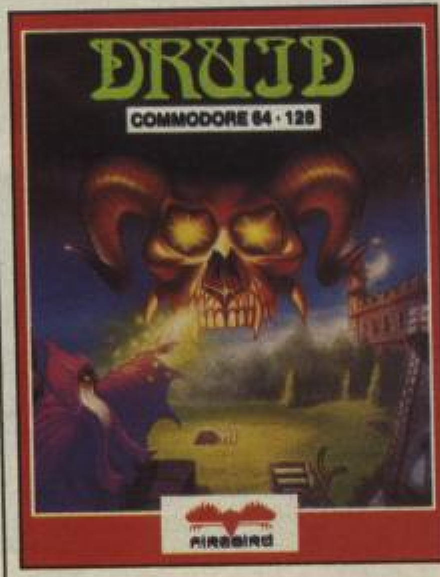
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THE SENTINEL

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DRUID

An addictive multi-directional scrolling, one or two player exploration game. Deep inside an eight level dungeon lie four skulls of immense evil, brought to life by the Princess of Darkness. As a Druid, it is your task to find and destroy them before their evil is unleashed upon mankind.
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 88%



HEARTLAND

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'Packed with atmosphere and humour'
Richard Eddy, ZZAP! 64, February 1986

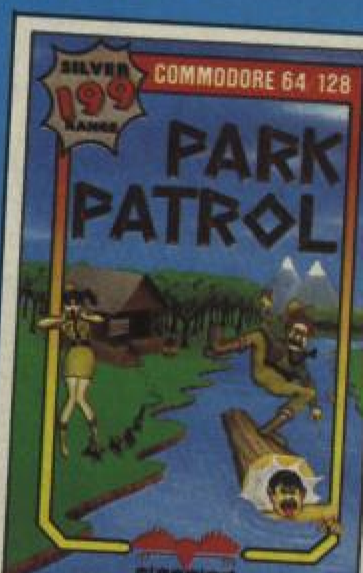
GROUP B



MICRORHYTHM

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'This is a really amazing drum program – better than anything else I've seen or heard on the Commodore, and some of the more expensive drum machines'
Julian Rignall, ZZAP! 64, December 1986.

GROUP A



PARK PATROL

A highly original and playable arcade-style collect 'em up. Features superb graphics, five neat tunes and excellent sound effects. A Sizzler (94%) in this very issue!
'... brilliant in all respects'
Julian Rignall, ZZAP! 64 February 1987



THRUST

A multi-directional scrolling shoot 'em up loosely based on the ageing arcade game GRAVITAR. A ZZAP! Sizzler at 94%
'Thrust is immensely playable . . . there is no excuse to miss this slice of arcade action.'
Gary Liddon, ZZAP! 64, May 1986

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WORLD GAMES™

HOLIDAY

COMPETITION

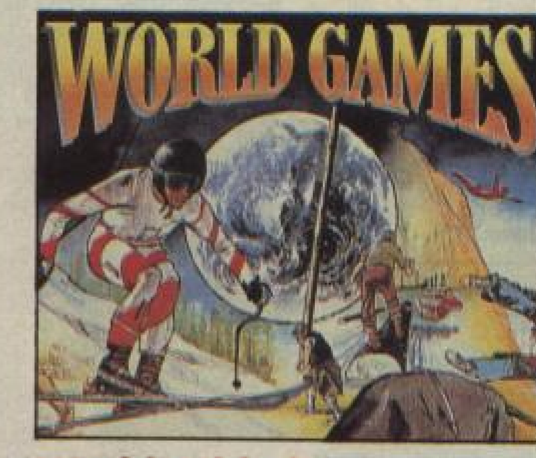
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WORLD GAMES™ Competition



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RUNNERS-UP PRIZES



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Question 2. In what year was the Roman invasion of Britain ....

Question 3. Who painted the renowned ceiling of the Sistine Chapel ....

Caption (complete in not more than 25 words) Rome is an appropriate venue for the World Games because

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HYPABALL

Odin, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys

Hypaball is a sport of the future in which two teams battle to score the most goals by throwing a steel sphere into a moving target. The game is three-a-side, with the players wearing jet packs – essential if they are to reach the target which moves up and down a pole in the centre of the playing arena. This simulation allows one or two players to replay the 'classic' cup final match between the Vipers and the Hawks. A computer controlled Vipers team makes up for the lack of a human opponent in the one-player mode.



Hypaball **is a poor attempt at producing a future sport. If such a game is going to be impressive or interesting it has to be atmospheric, original or innovative in its conception, and most importantly it has to be playable.** Hypaball **is fairly original, but unfortunately it lacks innovation, atmosphere and playability. There is some initial atmosphere generated by the music and dancing cheerleaders (very cute), but during play there is no feeling of 'being there' – mainly because the characters and playing area are so small. More flexibility and variety in gameplay would have helped, but as it stands** Hypaball **is far too dull to play – even against a human opponent. I would have expected more than this simple, unimaginative future sport from a company with Odin's reputation.**



Hypaball **is very slickly presented and its graphics and sound are great. The major problem lies in the gameplay. For a start, you can only play one match and are stuck with the same two teams. Surely it would have been much better if you could choose your team colours and perhaps input its name – it's little points like that which make a program all the more enjoyable. The second problem lies in its difficulty, or rather the lack of it. The computer team only has one skill level which is ridiculously easy to beat. Why not have several levels, or teams of differing ability? – that would have really made the game. As it stands it's a pretty miserable affair, with the only saving grace of a two player option – but you can't really fail with that. Even if you are a future sport fan I'd recommend that you avoid** Hypaball **– it looks really appetising on the outside, but once you get your teeth into it, you realise how bland and boring it actually is.**

Teams are selected from a panel of ten players before the match begins. They all have different strengths and weaknesses, the details of which are displayed under their pictures. It's up to the user to decide which characters are best suited to his or her team.

When the teams have been chosen, play commences with six cheerleaders rising up from under the playing arena. The teams then





After seeing Heartland **I was ready to forgive Odin for their recent batch of mediocre software. But unfortunately along comes** Hypaball **– their worst game to date. It does have potential but sadly the programmers haven't utilised it, which is a great shame.** Hypaball **fails because it is so incredibly boring – from the first game I found the action tedious and repetitive. After playing a few games and becoming competent at controlling the players, the computer team poses no threat whatsoever. Even at budget price this wouldn't be any big deal – but at just under a tenner . . . well all I can say is don't bother.**

appear and take up positions in the arena: one member of each team stays on the floor, while the other four players take up positions on either side of the central 'goal pole'. A metal sphere is fired into the arena and the match begins.

The user controls two players at once: lateral joystick movements make the ground player run left and right, while both lateral and longitudinal movements are used to control the flying players. Only one flying player is controlled at a time, with the computer automatically switching control from one player to the other as the ball moves around the screen. The ground player however, is always under control.

The ball is automatically caught if it comes within range of any player. The player can then be moved, and the ball released by pressing the fire button. The ball can only be held for two and a half seconds – any longer incurs a penalty, and the opposing team is given a free throw at the goal.

The match is played over ten minutes, after which time the final score is displayed on a newspaper along with headlines revealing details of the match.

PRESENTATION 89%
A one or two-player option and some neat in-game touches, but there are a few annoying delays.

GRAPHICS 51%
A reasonable backdrop with small, simple sprites.

SOUND 67%
Four different tunes, but they're quite tedious.

HOOKABILITY 55%
Deceptively easy to play and tedious with it.

LASTABILITY 35%
The computer opponent is easy to beat, although the two-player option offers some lasting interest – but not much.

VALUE 29%
Too much gloss and not enough game to justify its price.

OVERALL 36%
A very disappointing and tedious future sport.

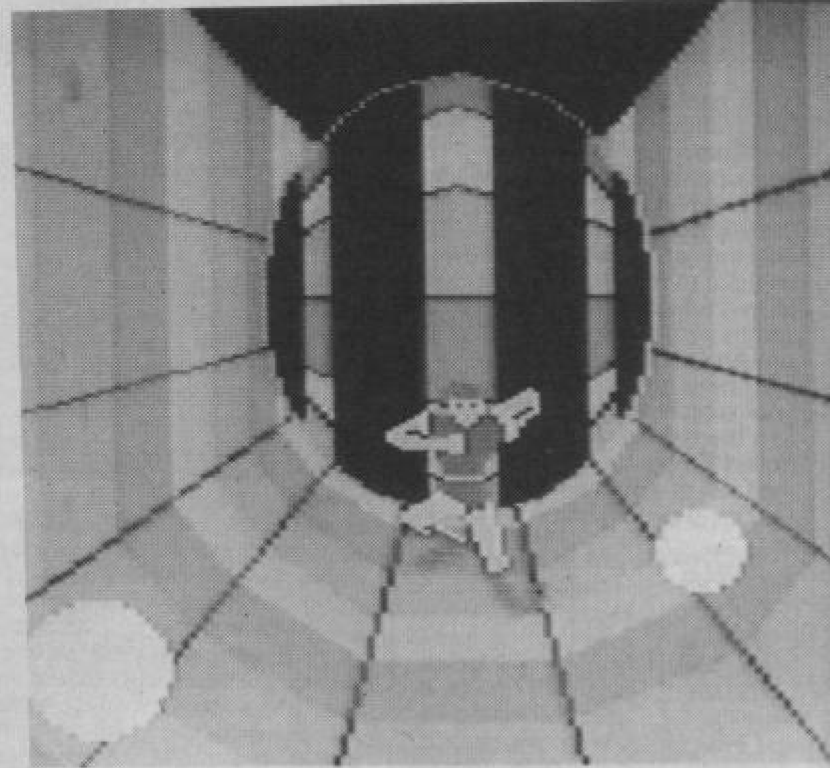


ESCAPE FROM SINGE'S CASTLE

DRAGON'S LAIR PART II

Software Projects, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick only

● **Superbly executed and highly playable sequel to** Dragon's Lair

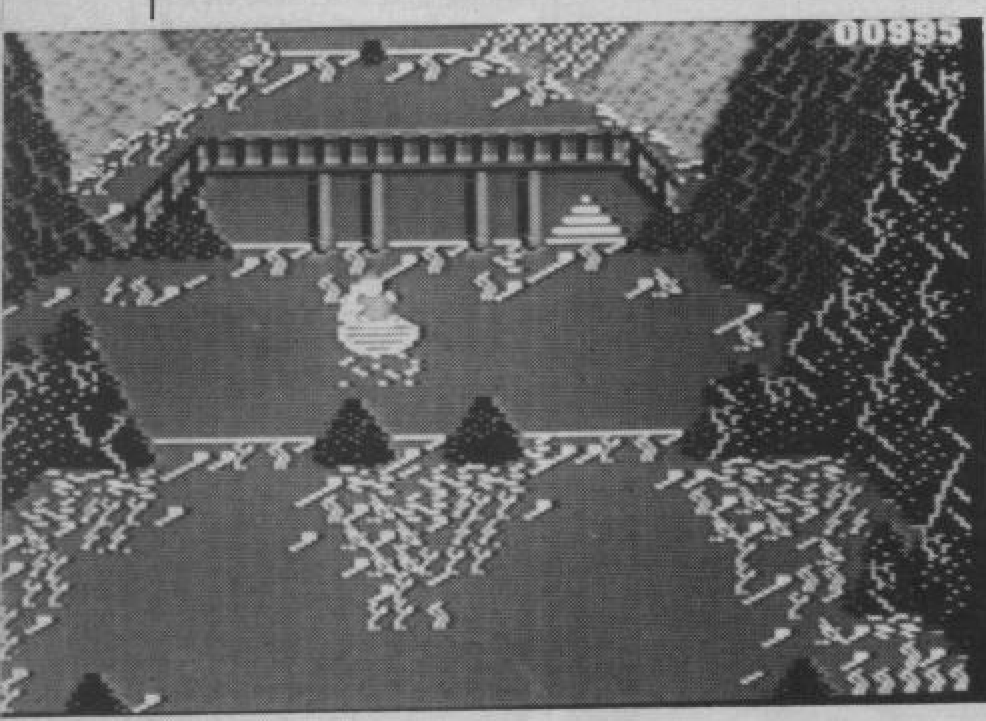


After rescuing the beautiful Princess Daphne from the clutches of Singe the Dragon, Dirk has decided to seek fame and fortune by returning to Singe's Castle. In the very depths of the castle is the Lizard King's realm where, according to legend, there lies a magical pot of gold which gives unlimited wealth to its owner. And Dirk wants it – badly.

However, Dirk has to negotiate eight different sections of the Lizard King's realm if he is to collect the pot and bring it out safely. The sections are a representation of eight scenes which appeared in the original *Dragon's Lair* laser disk arcade game. To minimise delays, each section is loaded in from cassette as you play.

BOULDER ALLEY

With the river safely traversed it's time to emulate *Indiana Jones*. A giant boulder pursues Dirk down a narrow, slippery alley, forcing him to run for his life. Smaller boulders oscillate from side to side, and have to be dodged while holes in the floor have to be jumped over – otherwise Dirk trips and gets crushed to death by the following boulder.

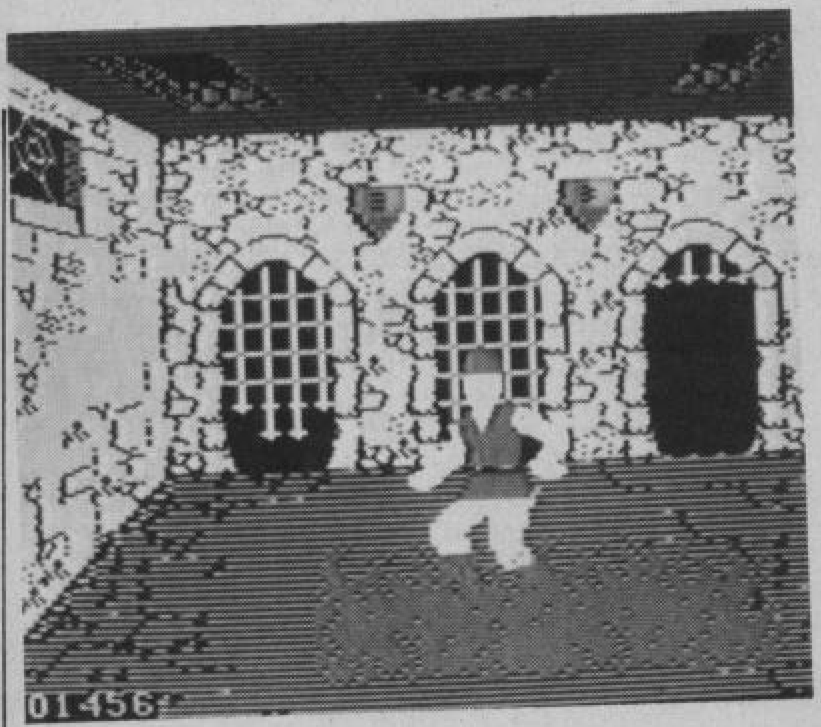




YE RIVER CAVES

The first episode is played over a series of 3D flick screens, and follows Dirk's journey down a mysterious river into the depths of the castle. Seated in his coracle, the paddling hero has to negotiate a safe passage through the rapids and waterfalls by avoiding the rocks and vicious whirlpools.

Dragon's Lair was a very good idea which was unfortunately let down by some rather mediocre sound, occasional poor graphics and simplistic and frustrating gameplay. For the sequel, however, the Software Projects programming team have improved upon the graphics and the overall presentation – you can now skip the elongated death sequences by pressing the fire button. The sound has also improved immensely with nine fabulous Rob Hubbard tunes adding a great atmosphere to the different situations. The eight scenarios are varied and include a hand-to-eye co-ordination game, an arcade sequence, a 3D puzzle and two screens which really capture the flavour of the original arcade game. They're all very playable indeed and have just the right amount of frustration – it makes you furious when you die, but you're eager to return for another game! The cassette loading system is another boon – a truly excellent feature which puts C2N owners one up on disk drive owners for once! If you had any doubts about the program forget them – Dragon's Lair Part II **is a great game.**



DOOM DUNGEON

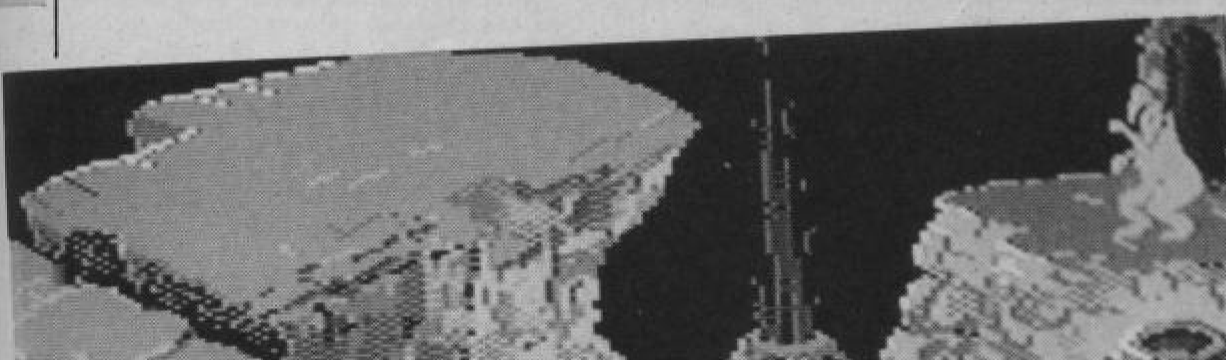
Another screen similar to its arcade counterpart. Dirk has become trapped in a room filled with hazards. Bolts of lightning crack down from the ceiling and ignite the floor, forcing Dirk to lead a merry dance. Avoid the fire and the malevolent creatures which appear and an exit opens allowing Dirk to escape . . .

I wasn't looking forward to this at all, I didn't think much of Dragons Lair **and sequels are seldom a patch on their predecessors. Happily** Dragons Lair II **has turned out to be a very good game. However, I'm surprised that there isn't a little bit more in the way of depth – eight levels aren't really enough to keep me playing for very long, no matter how hard they are. The graphics are excellent, the attention to detail is commendable and the animation in some of the sections is really good. The music and effects are also brilliant. All in all I'd strongly recommend this – it's playable and extremely compelling.**



MUD MONSTERS

Escape from the castle is in sight, but only if the hero can reach the bottle on the other side of a pool of very hot, steaming mud. Living mud monsters appear from the heart of three mud pools and do their best to drag Dirk down into the mud as he tries to find a path across the pool. Escape is the reward for collecting the bottle. A muddy grave is the penalty for failure . . .





At last Software Projects have got it right. Escape From Singe's Castle **is a significant improvement over** Dragon's Lair **– eight slick and very playable mini-games rolled into one. The Throne Room and Doom Dungeon are probably the weakest sections of the lot, as they have to be solved rather than played and this can prove quite tiresome. Having to play through two sections just to get a crack at solving the Throne Room is highly frustrating, especially when you die and have to start all over again. But even so, I found the action highly compelling. On the whole the graphics are impressive – there are a few weak areas, but a bulk of quality definition and animation makes up for this. The nine different pieces of Rob Hubbard music are all suitably atmospheric, especially the tune played in Boulder Alley which compliments the action perfectly. Oh – and the stunning gong sounds in Mud Monsters. Great stuff. I don't regard** Escape From Singe's Castle as a competent conversion – it couldn't be. But it is a visually and aurally impressive, well presented and addictive game in its own right. Don't miss it.

PRESENTATION 97%
Brilliant cassette multi-loading system and superb in-game presentation.

GRAPHICS 92%
Vary from very good to excellent, depending on the screen.

SOUND 97%
The nine different tunes and jingles add a fabulous atmosphere to the action.

HOOKABILITY 92%
Instant playability with a perfect balance between frustration and a sense of achievement.

LASTABILITY 88%
Eight tough but addictive scenarios to solve.

VALUE 90%
Lots of quality game for your money.

OVERALL 90%
An excellent arcade conversion consisting of eight varied and addictive mini-games.

PSYCASTRIA

Audiogenic Software, £8.95 cass, joystick or keys

An evil breed of aliens known as the Psycastria are rampaging through the galaxy; raping, pillaging and looting all they encounter. The only way this terror can be brought to an end is if one pilot flies out to the Psycastria's home planet and destroys the sixteen energy storage bases. That one pilot is you . . .

Psycastria is a bi-directional, horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up, with 3D bas-relief graphics portraying the action. You have to guide a nimble space fighter across sixteen energy bases, destroying the ten circular energy pods which lie on the surface of each base. There are other score-boosting ground targets which can be strafed, although care must be taken in order to avoid crashing into the indestructible higher structures – identified by the long shadows they cast across the surface of the base.

Tall structures aren't the only thing to worry about – there are many Psycastria patrol craft zooming up and down the length of the base looking for an enemy intruder to blast with their laser missiles. Fortunately your craft is equipped with a deadly laser gun which can be used to destroy alien craft.

When all the energy pods have been destroyed, you are invited to land the fighter on the base's runway and increase your score by partaking in a sub-game. Individual aliens fly across the screen and pass a marker – bonus points are awarded if the aliens are shot the instant they pass the marker.

After the sub-game the fighter takes off and automatically zooms back along the length of the base, allowing you to take out any ground targets you missed along the way. When the fighter has travelled the length of the base it is transported to the next, more difficult target where the battle starts afresh. On destroying every fourth base, the player is pitted against wave after wave of Psycastria craft in a bonus screen.



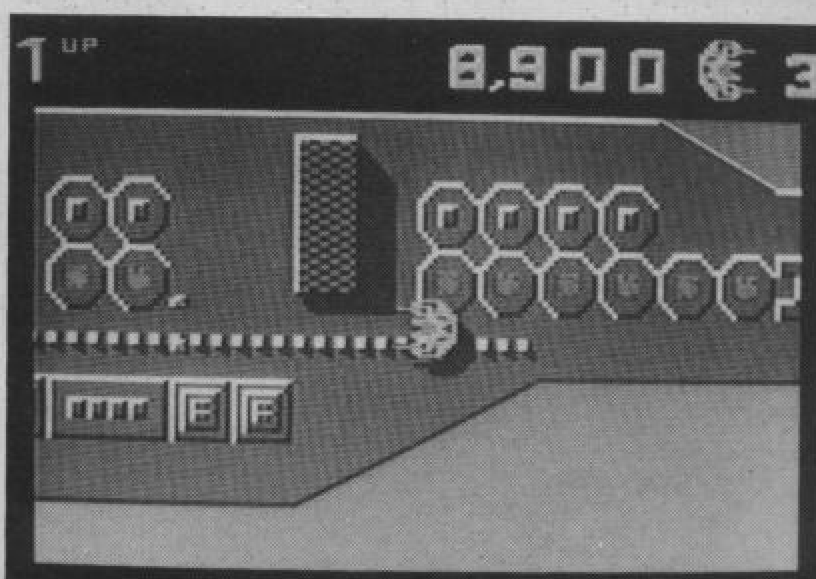
How Audiogenic have got the cheek to put 'state of the art shoot 'em up action' on the cassette inlay I don't know. This is rubbish, paling miserably into insignificance beside the likes of Uridium Plus **and** Sanxion**. The graphics are really poor and the bas-relief doesn't really work at all because the colours are wrong. The sound is ghastly, the ship sounds like an ancient car and the speech is grating. The really bad thing though, is that it's incredibly boring and frustrating to play. For a start it's all been seen before, and it requires ridiculously precise shooting. By the way – did you know that** Psycastria **is an anagram of 'say its crap'?**

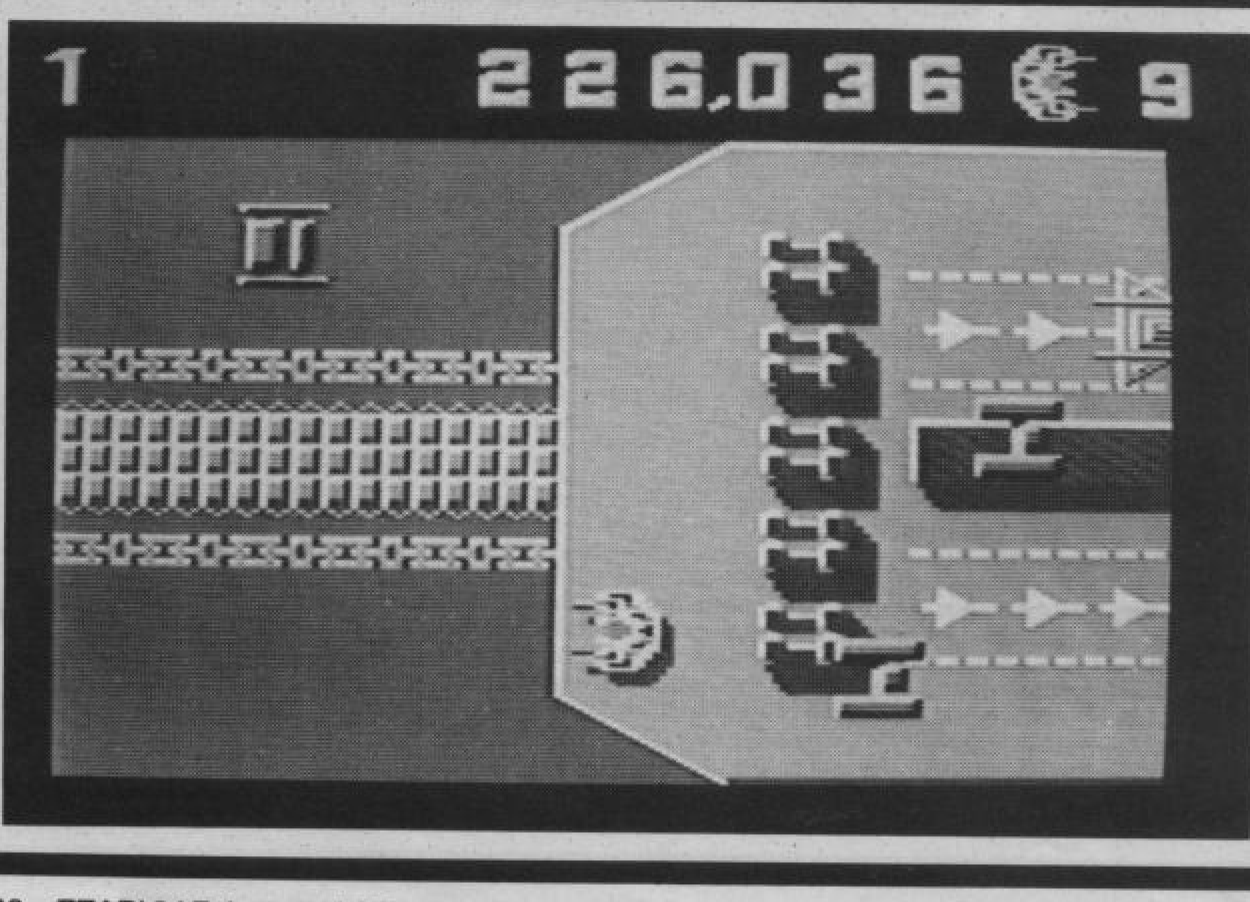


Psycastria **is very poor shoot 'em up with nothing original or impressive going for it. The graphics are rather bland and clinical with comparatively slow scrolling. The main sprite, although well defined and smooth, is very slow to react – especially when flipping round. Some of the mazes on the later levels are near impossible and must be taken very slowly, which only results in you becoming the victim of alien target practice. A plain, uninteresting version of** Uridium **that could have been a lot more imaginative.**



As Uridium **clones go,** Psycastria **is the worst I've seen and played. It doesn't feel or look as slick as** Uridium **– the bas-relief backdrops are relatively simple and the colour schemes are foul. To avoid complications the programmer has set most of the alien bases on 'solid' backdrops in an attempt to compensate for the ship's shadow appearing 'in space'. But it doesn't work – it looks so silly, even on the bases in space which have a black screen (black shadow, see). Some of the sound effects are virtually identical to Mr Braybrook's – and not just from** Uridium**! There are a few** Gribbly's Day Out **and** Paradroid **noises thrown in for good measure. Controlling the ship doesn't feel good and it's terribly sluggish at times – it must be some form of hi-tech diesel-driven machine, judging by the noise it makes.** Psycastria **is a highly derivative, inferior and somewhat offensive version of** Uridium**. Get the Hewson double pack instead – it's marginally more expensive, but you get two superbly souped-up classics for the price of one.**





PRESENTATION 86%
Comprehensive and competent in all respects.

GRAPHICS 35%
Very poor bas-relief and chunky, unimaginative sprites.

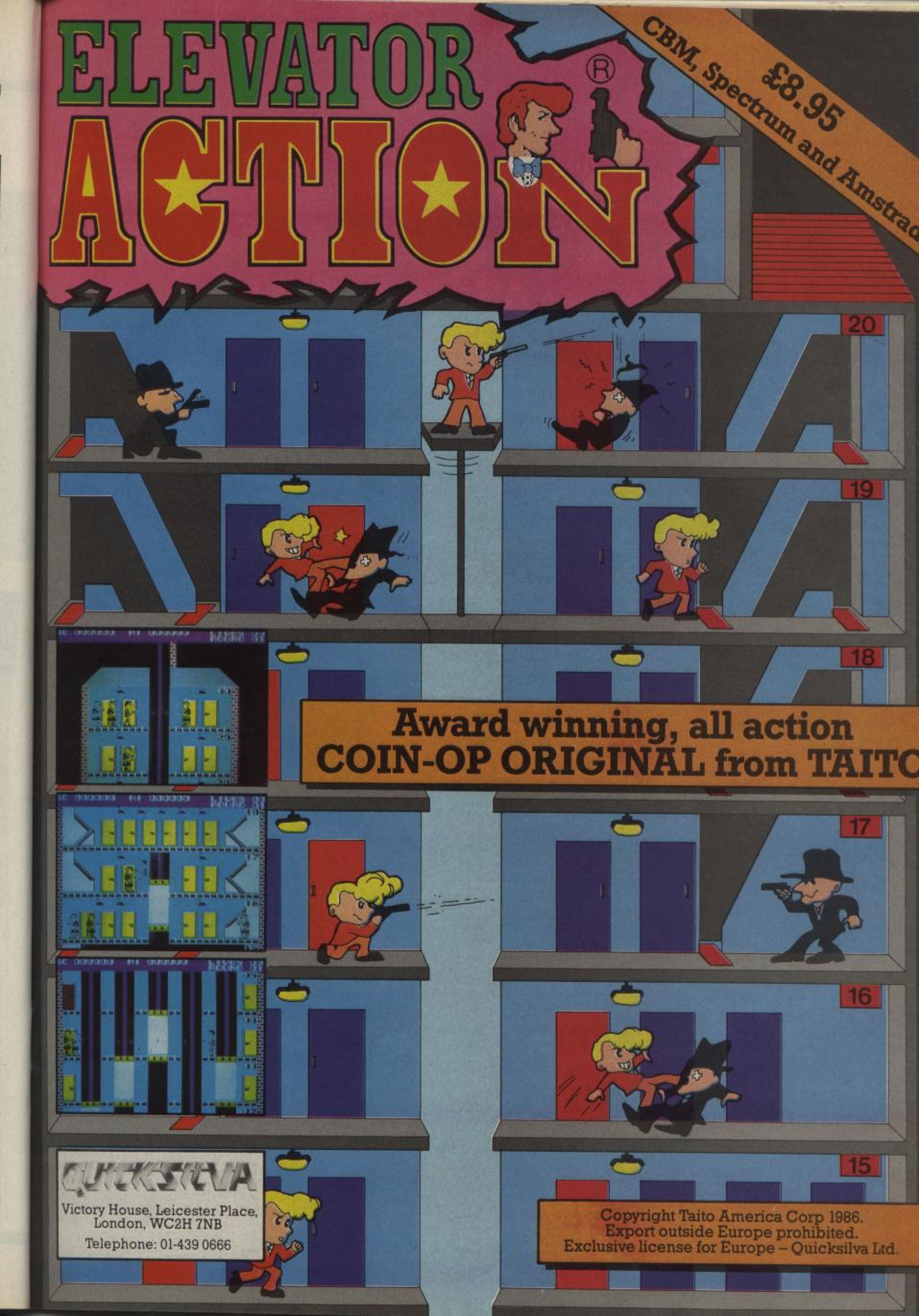
SOUND 39%
Very scratchy, occasionally incoherent speech combined with a ghastly title screen tune and unsuitable spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 31%
Simple objective, but nothing new to create any interest.

LASTABILITY 18%
Boredom sets in after a few games.

VALUE 14%
It would be a little more acceptable if it had a budget price tag.

OVERALL 20%
An uninspiring and overpriced *Uridium* clone.



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IT'S A KNOCKOUT

Ocean, £8.95 cass, joystick and keys

Teams of grown men and women from six different countries dress in daft outfits and compete in silly games, desperately trying to prove how wacky and zany they really are. That's what the television show *It's a Knockout* was about. And that's what this game is based on.



This is a really awful Decathlon-type game, **with poor graphics, feeble sound and very little in the way of playability. I imagine that this is supposed make you laugh, but the only thing remotely funny is how bad it really is. The six games are terrible – play them once and you never really want to play them again. Do yourself a big favour and give it a miss.**

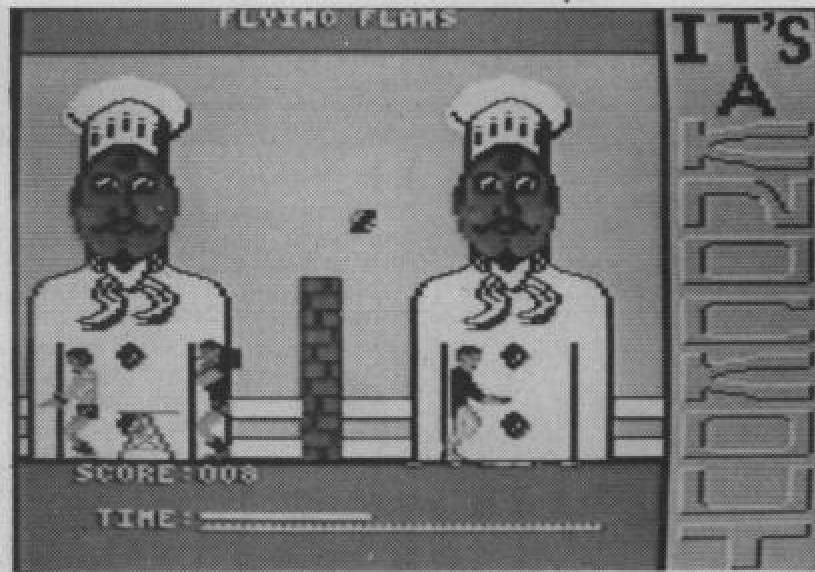
Before play begins, a menu is displayed showing the six countries: Britain, Germany, France, Italy, Belgium and Holland. From here you are requested to enter the number of people playing along with the countries they wish to play for. If a country is not represented the computer provides its score after an event. There are six events, one of which is the marathon game. A team selected by the computer competes in the marathon at the end of a round. Each event is played against the clock, represented by a horizontal bar at the bottom of the screen.

The FLAN FLING is the first event and takes place in a room divided by a wall. Gooey flans are catapulted over this wall and to score a point the player has to catch the sticky projectiles and place them in a serving hatch. Moving the joystick left or right guides the waiter who has to cope with an increasingly slippery floor as flans are fumbled.

After all the flans have been flung it's out to the desert to play HARLEM HOPPERS. Small spheres are rolled down a camel's back and must be caught as they fall from its tail end. To make life difficult the player under your control is attached to a length of elastic which pulls him away from the camel as he attempts to catch a ball. The ground is greasy too, which adds to the fun!



It's licence time again – and I'm appalled. It's a Knockout **couldn't have been any worse. It looks bad, sounds even worse, and plays like a brick. The only event that vaguely amused me was Bronte Bash – only because it's nice and violent. The others are downright sad, and very dull. It all seemed so pointless that in the end I just gave and up and turned off.**



Then the teams are taken out to sea for TITANIC DROP. It looks like passengers are escaping from a sinking ship by sliding down a lifeline and dropping into lifebelts below . . . Pressing the fire button determines when a passenger falls, and points are given for landing in a lifebelt.

On to DIET OF WORMS: a large chicken is placed under your control and must be guided around the screen to catch worms which pop up from the ground. Peck up a worm and take it to a container at the bottom of the screen to gain points.

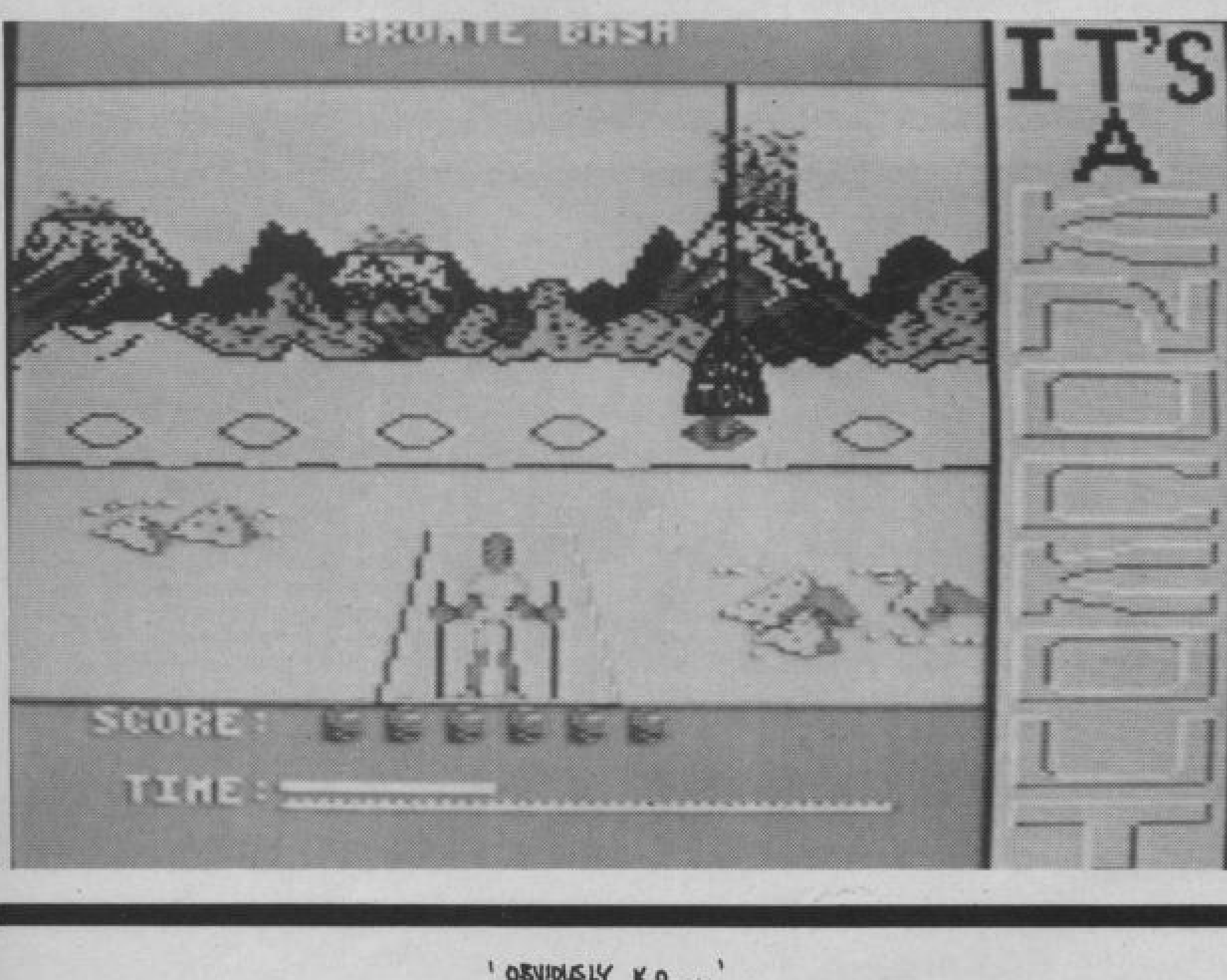
Finally the OBSTACLE RACE is run against the computer. Scurrying along a horizontally-scrolling track, waggle your joystick left and right to keep up speed and press the fire button to jump over the obstructions.

Which leaves the marathon, attempted by each team at the computer's whim. Dinosaurs emerge, at random, from a row of six craters. Using a crane, the aim is to bonk the prehistoric beasts on the bonce with a ton weight before they duck back to safety. A point is given for each dinosaur squashed.

After each event the computer updates the scoreboard. At the end of the game final rankings are worked out, the winner is announced and then it's back to the start, and off we go again . . .



It's a Knockout **is awful. Hardly surprising really, considering the quality of the television show on which it is based. The graphics, music and spot FX are crude, and suit the quality of the game. None of the events are amusing, addictive or demanding as they involve little more than a well-timed press of the fire button. Occasionally frustrating, and tedious more often than not.**



PRESENTATION 81%
Multi-player option, computer controlled score system and adequate instructions.

GRAPHICS 37%
Crude sprites and gaudy colour schemes.

SOUND 34%
Uninspiring anthems and spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 39%
Immediately playable, but not very addictive.

LASTABILITY 28%
The six events are far too banal to enthral.

VALUE 28%
Nine quid is a lot to pay for so little.

OVERALL 34%
A poor 'alternative' *Decathlon*-style game.

'OBVIOUSLY K.O....'

ZZAP! TEST

INFODROID

Beyond, £9.95 cass, joystick or keys

What's going to happen when man finally breaks the gravitational chains that have forced him to walk the Earth for so long? As he expands his horizons will there be just one administrative capital, or will society become decentralised and the isolated factions become empires in their own right? *Infodroid* explores the former possibility, concentrating on a minute part of an immense, integrated administrative network.

A planet entirely devoted to the administration of man's colonies is the setting. Interstellar bureaucratic offices cover its surface and penetrate deep underground. Instant communication is essential, with ninety-percent of correspondence being electronic. Packages and important documents are distributed by a robotic despatch system.

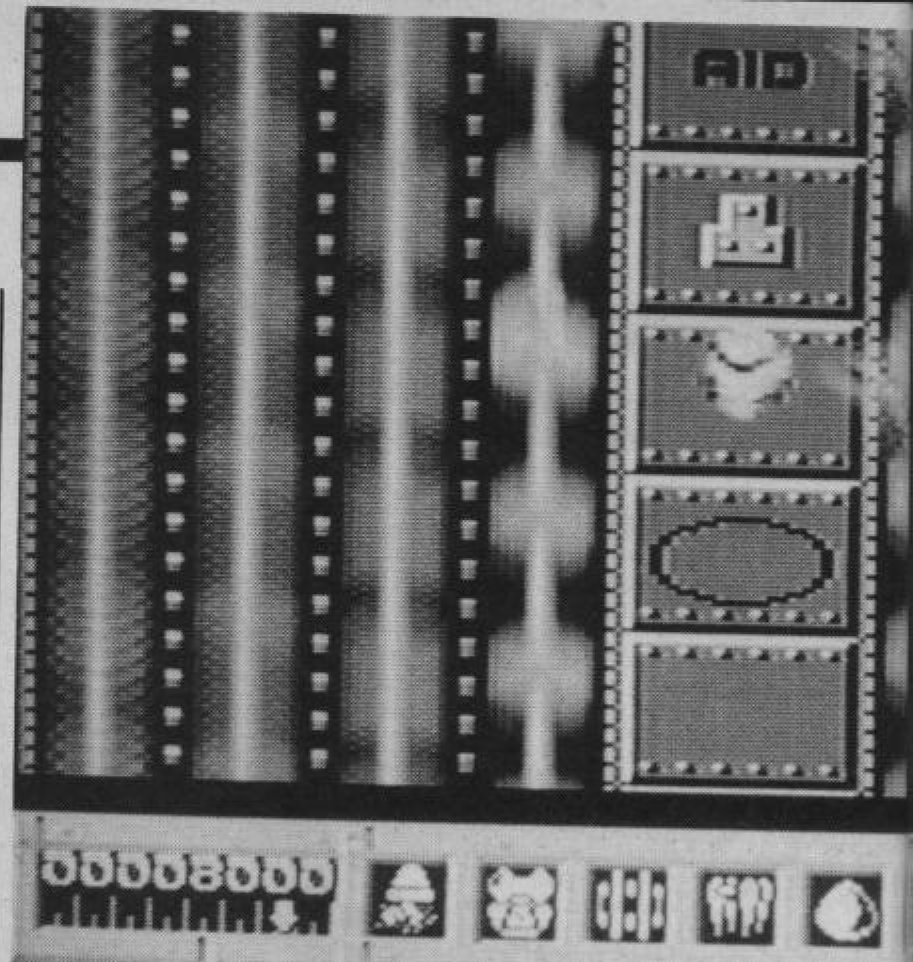
Originally set up as a co-operative, the non-automatic despatch system soon became corrupt, with packages being 'lost' or stolen by unscrupulous operators seeking additional profit. This decay brought about a response from legitimate organisations, who produced defence and attack droids to combat pirates.

Droids make their way around the vast administrative complex by using fifteen major causeways – four lanes of bi-directional platforms move either side of a static central lane. Lifts lead down from the central lane to offices, information rooms and junctions with other causeways.

You play the robot operator of the newly formed **Droid Despatch Company NLC** (No Liability Company). Starting with 8,000 credits, profits must be built up by successfully completing despatch duties. A standard delivery droid can be bought for 3,500 credits, and additional parts purchased by visiting garages scattered throughout the city.



This is a mite confusing at first and it takes time to get to grips with the controls. The pace is fast, and the droid's equipment must be constantly monitored for damage sustained on the causeways – which requires a lot of concentration! It pays to make a map and take notes on where items are to be delivered, as the interlinking causeway systems are enormous and can be rather overwhelming. Many a time I was supposed to be making a delivery and I forgot where I was supposed to go! Initially irritating, but fun once you get to grips with it.



The blurs either side of the Infodroid on the static central lane are the moving causeways

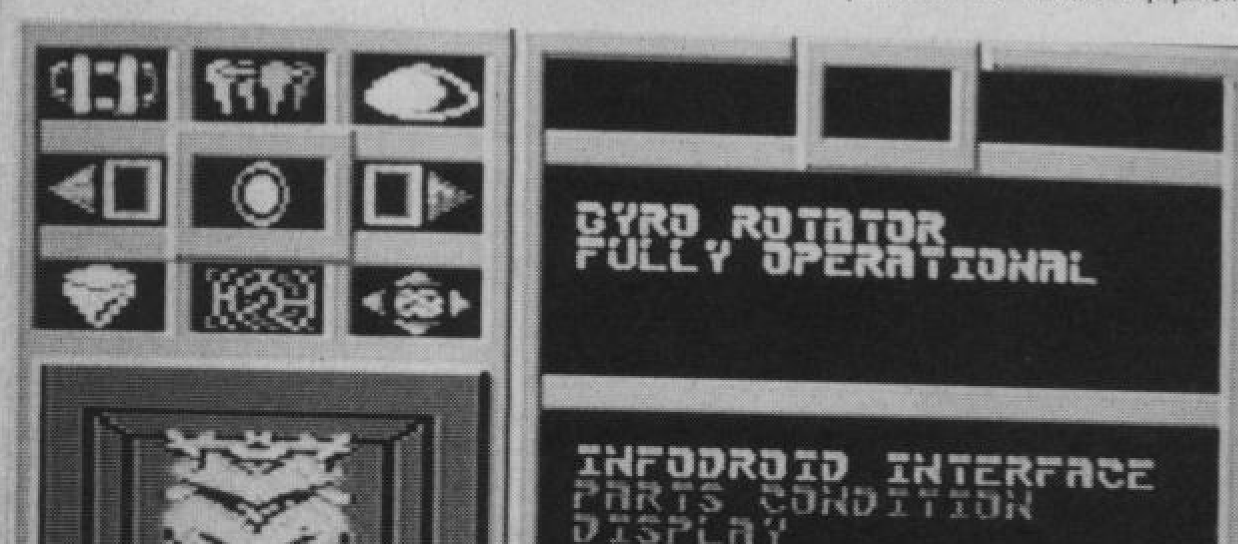
Play begins in an information room on the Great Circular causeway. The screen is split into five sections: a multi-icon display is situated at the bottom of the screen; above it are two text screens. To the left there is a main display, which shows your droid sitting in a glass cube, and at the top left there is a grid containing nine icons. By pressing the fire button and moving the joystick in the appropriate direction, the cube is rotated and a new set of icons appear in the grid. Icons can be used to change the soundtrack (there are four tunes, or you can choose sound effects only), inspect the droid's equipment, view mail carried or exit to the causeway.

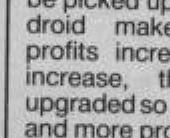
When the exit icon is selected, the droid enters a lift and is taken up to the central lane. The four lanes either side of the central lane travel at different speeds – the outermost lanes move fastest of all. The droid can be made to jump onto adjacent lanes by nudging the joystick left or right.

Delivery droids carrying out their business swarm over the causeway. Contact with another metallic messenger damages your droid's systems and jeopardises its existence. Fortunately, damage can be repaired by visiting a garage – your energy level is topped up into the bargain and equipment can be bought, sold, repaired or recharged.

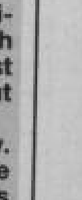
To leave the moving causeway the droid has to jump onto the central, static lane. It can then bounce to a lift and descend to an office below, where packages can be picked up or deposited. As the droid makes deliveries, your profits increase. And as profits increase, the droid can be upgraded so it can deal with larger, and more profitable deliveries.

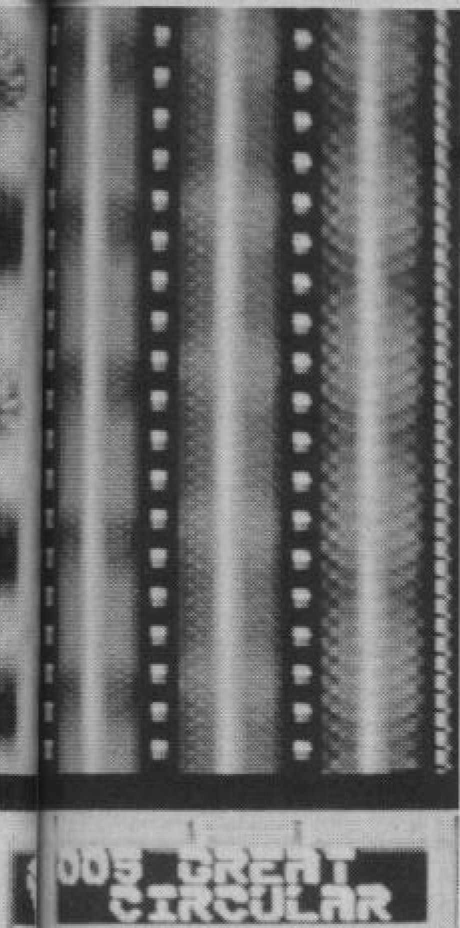
Inside a garage. The infodroid is the mouse-like creature inside the cube





Infodroid is original, but dull with it – which just goes to show that originality doesn't guarantee playability. It's graphically sparse – the effect of moving causeway is neat, but that's about it. The four soundtracks are 'samey', and the simple spot FX aren't much of an alternative. There is a fair degree of depth, but I found the task of delivering 'mail' very tedious and wasn't inspired to play for very long. See what you think – I'm afraid it's not my cup of tea.







Infodroid **is an odd game, but very original and highly entertaining nevertheless. It looked a bit dull at first, but after a couple of hours play it became apparent that it's far from that. There's more to the game than just collecting and dropping off parcels: you have to keep an eye on your status, buy parts for your droid, and even steal parcels and sell them to pirate networks. What I really like though, is Infodroid's depth, and the way you can interact within the environment. The graphics are well executed with lots of colour and loads of original ideas. The sound is great too, with four different soundtracks to choose from. If you like spending time over games, then definitely look at this.**

PRESENTATION 90%
Informative instructions and effective use of icons.

GRAPHICS 78%
Imaginative and well drawn, but not overly varied or colourful.

SOUND 60%
Four monotonous soundtracks and reasonable spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 68%
The alien environment is tricky to get used to.

LASTABILITY 81%
If you enjoy operating the despatch droid there's plenty to keep you coming back for more.

VALUE 74%
A completely new world is yours to explore for just under a tenner.

OVERALL 79%
Worth a look if you want alternative entertainment.

DEFCOM

Quicksilva, £9.95 cass, joystick or keys

It's the year 2056 and Earth's 'Star Wars' defence system has made war a thing of the past. For years mankind lived without conflict – until disaster struck and Earth's orbiting defence network was turned into a deadly weapon by a passing fleet of marauding aliens.

Only one man could save the world from destruction – Captain Nick Diamond. So, jumping into the cockpit of his Eagle Class E751 space fighter, he set off.

In *Defcom*, you play Nick Diamond and are in control of the E751. The fighter appears near the bottom of the screen with the Earth rotating below. Alien formations sweep in and out of the screen, firing missiles which deplete your ship's energy on contact. The aim is simple: destroy the aliens and the satellites under their control.

Pressing the space bar calls up a menu from which a map of the World can be accessed. Scrolling messages tell you where the aliens are grouping so your craft can be directed to the trouble spots. After 1000 points have been scored, an anti-satellite homing missile is earned and a double laser is bolted on to your ship. This powerful weapon is activated using the menu system, but it drains more energy than the conventional laser, so it has to be used wisely.

The destruction wreaked on the world's major cities is measured by a system of diminishing points. They start off with a value of five, and if this is allowed fall to zero the city is totally destroyed. To prevent this, you must destroy the relevant satellite. There are eight cities in total, if these are destroyed your mission has failed and the game is over.



Defcom **is a sort of small screen version of** Gyruss **with extra, superfluous features. There isn't a lot of variety in the graphics or gameplay, and to make matters worse it's highly frustrating to play. The aliens move too fast and are difficult to hit, and having to access an options menu during play causes a lot of unnecessary grief. I wouldn't be impressed if this was released at a budget price – I'm shocked to see it's full-priced.**



There's nothing in this game to sustain interest for more than a couple of minutes. The graphics are shoddy and the sprites flicker about the screen at ridiculously fast speeds, hardly giving you a nano-second to shoot them. You're hardly given a chance to avoid the enemy missiles if you move about, so it's best to stay on the extreme left hand side of the screen and keep your finger on the fire button (using this method you never seem to die!). The tune played throughout is nice, but it doesn't really suit the game at all. Whether you're a shoot 'em up fan or not, forget it.



After having worked out that the things whizzing across the screen at a rate of knots are the alien craft, the only problem left is to shoot them – they're just too fast! Having to access an options menu while playing, just to see your score and a display of what's going on, is rather silly – while you're trying to do so the alien onslaught continues and more often than not you are blown to pieces. Destroying the satellites is easier said than done. Again they shoot past at great speed, and I haven't managed to blast one yet. There isn't much to Defcom, and what's there is totally unplayable.

PRESENTATION 68%
Impressive high-score table, silly menu system.

GRAPHICS 39%
Poor 3D effect and flickery sprites. Interesting effects on the title screen though.

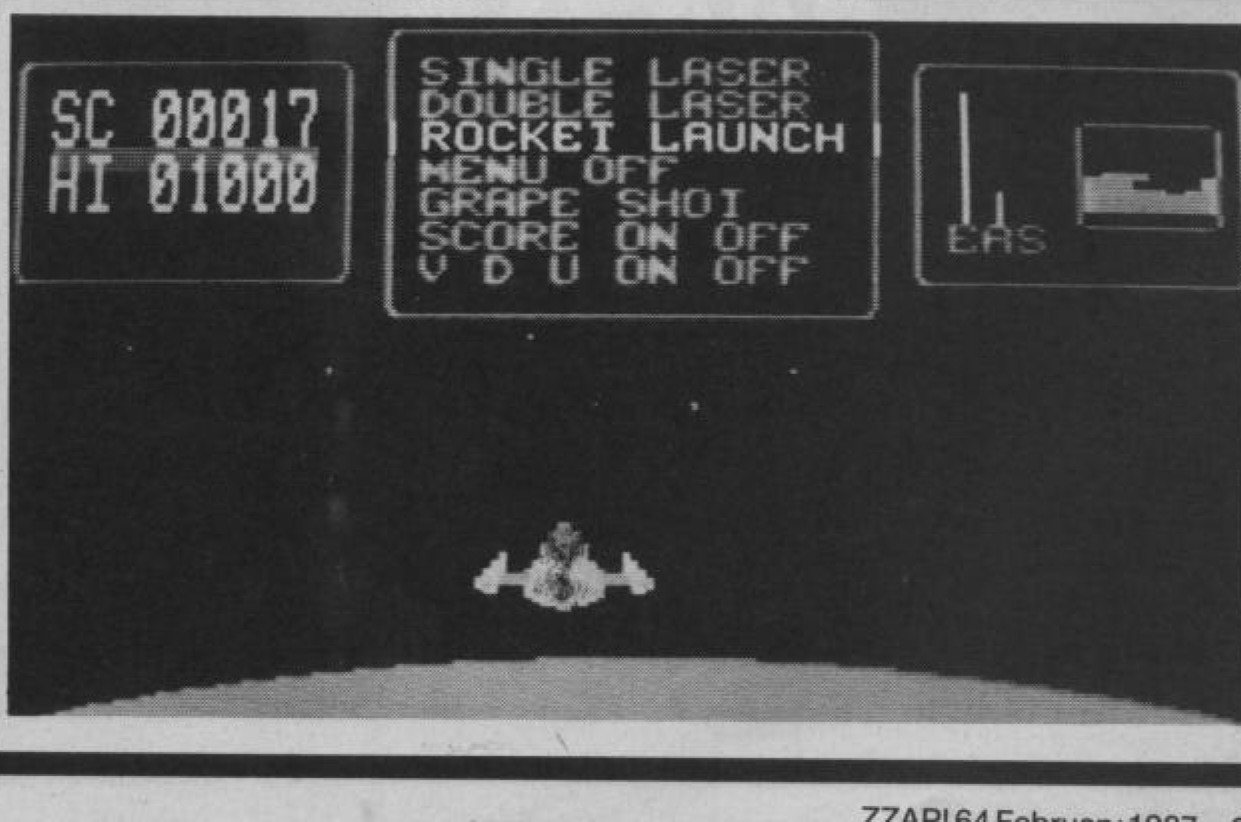
SOUND 74%
A decent David Whittaker tune plays throughout, but it doesn't really suit the action.

HOOKABILITY 38%
Mediocre playability and repetitive gameplay fail to inspire.

LASTABILITY 28%
Not much variety or excitement.

VALUE 26%
Ridiculous price tag for what is essentially sub-standard budget software.

OVERALL 35%
Quite simply a very dull and overpriced shoot 'em up.



ZZAP! TEST

COBRA

Ocean, £8.95 cass, joystick only

Once again Sylvester Stallone flexes his beefy binary muscles – not as Rocky or Rambo, but as Cobra, a New York cop out to rid the streets of rapists, muggers and murderers. They are the disease. He is the cure . . .

Cobra's bosses have given him a special mission – to rescue top fashion model Ingrid Knutsen, who has been kidnapped by the Midnight Slasher and his notorious gang. Taking the role of Cobra, you have to advance through three different scenes to reach the derelict factory where the model is being held. The mission starts in the city as Cobra roams the streets in search of the famous clotheshorse.

The screen scrolls horizontally with the action. Members of the Night Slasher's gang appear from all sides of the screen and try to sap Cobra's energy, either by physical contact, shooting or knifing him. His energy is measured by a hamburger at the bottom of the screen which slowly dissolves – if it disappears, one of Cobra's four lives is lost. The top cop isn't helpless in these situations though – he can run, duck, jump, and climb ladders, or punch in retaliation.



This is slow, tedious and frustratingly unplayable – mainly because Cobra (who doesn't even faintly resemble Sylvester Stallone) is sluggish and awkward to control, and the enemy is too fast and aggressive. The backdrops and sprites are crude and lack colour, and the music played during the game is an earsore. Cobra is unoriginal, shoddy, unprofessional and grossly overpriced. Forget it.

As Cobra wanders through the city he comes across knives, grenades, bullets and guns which he can pick up and use. Weapons are displayed in the status panel at the bottom of the screen and selected with the function keys.

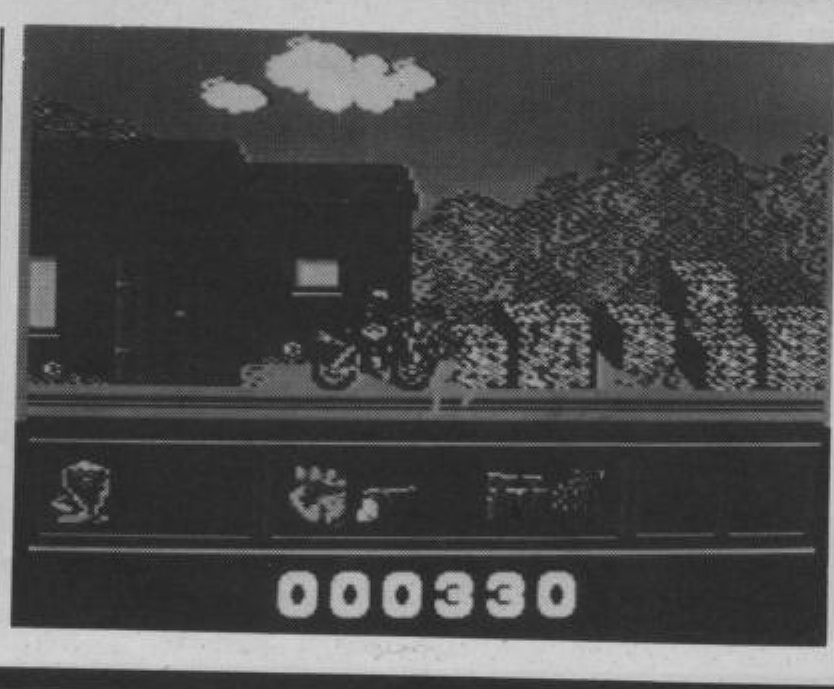
When the girl is found she has to be taken to the safety of Cobra's car. Unfortunately, she decides to go for a burger . . . and gets herself kidnapped by the gang again, forcing Cobra to rescue her (again). The action continues in a similar fashion as before, only the backdrop is a rural scene.

The final section takes place in the factory where Ingrid is begin held against her will. Cobra has to take on the whole gang – and the Night Slasher himself – in a final, deadly confrontation. If he kills them all the girl is rescued. Failure and . . . well, Stallone never fails – does he?





Ocean have made a complete hash of the Commodore version of Cobra. The graphics look as if they've been drawn by someone still at junior school. Basically Cobra is very boring and unimaginative, and I found it unplayable and hard to get in to. It features several old 'favourites', like bad character detection, characters that split in half, and lots of 'impossible' situations where you can't do anything but die. Trudging around the play area gets very dull very quickly, and isn't in the slightest bit addictive. Give it a miss.





What's the point of spending a fortune on a film licence when you're going to produce something as totally boring, banal and dire as this? What a complete waste of time and money – why not spend time producing some really good original games? I suppose if the public bought glass hammers for a lot of money it would be good business sense to keep producing them. This particular glass hammer has totally awful graphics, several major bugs, average sound and no playability whatsoever. The title character is very difficult to control and doesn't respond to joystick movements quick enough. Avoid this at all costs.

PRESENTATION 78%
Simple title screen, an attract mode and high-score table.

GRAPHICS 28%
Unimaginative, badly drawn backdrops and incredibly crude sprites.

SOUND 39%
Dull tunes and simple spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 24%
Frustrating, unplayable, and uninteresting.

LASTABILITY 12%
Severely lacks variety, playability and challenge.

VALUE 7%
Poor in all aspects – but mainly in price.

OVERALL 13%
An unplayable, unoriginal, unprofessional, unimaginative and unacceptable licensing travesty.




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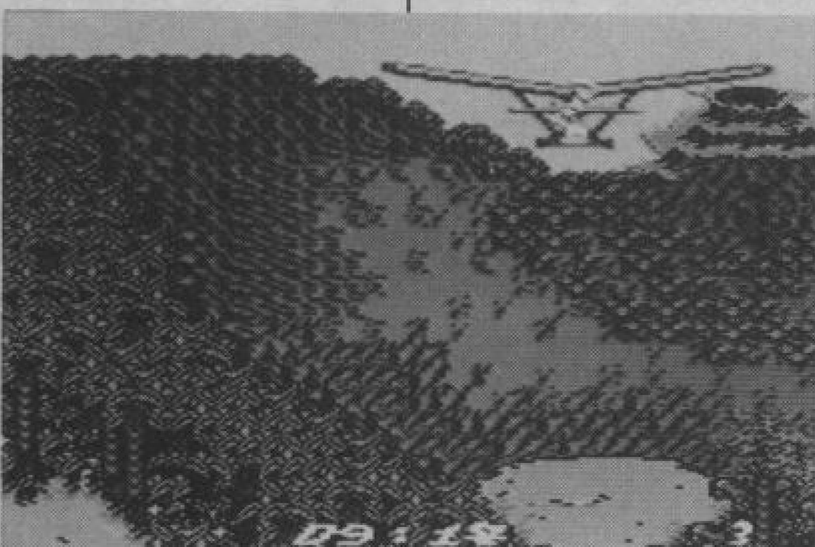
HOWARD THE DUCK

Activision, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick only

Howard is an extra-terrestrial duck who has been mysteriously spirited to Earth. He looks a bit odd, but is an amicable fellow with two friends, Beverly and Phil. Beverly and Phil are good sorts too, but they have just been kidnapped by the Dark Overlord, who has taken them to his abode on Volcano Island. Howard is a mite peeved at this, and so he sets out on a rescue mission. But what he doesn't know is that the Overlord is expecting this sort of reaction, and has set traps so he can capture the feathered hero and turn him into duck soup.

To begin with, the player's name must be typed in and the level of play selected from the four provided: novice, intermediate, advanced, and expert. The levels differ in the number of lives granted, the aggressiveness of the enemy and the length of the game – on beginner level you only have to get to the volcano to save your friends, whereas on the advanced level there's a lot more to do before the mission is completed. When the options have been chosen the adventure can begin.

The screen displays a view of the island and Howard automatically parachutes down from the skies onto a pathway. The joystick is used to move Howard around, and he can go anywhere as long as the landscape allows, scrolling the scenery as he goes. The fire button makes him jump, kick and punch, the action depending on the situation he's in.





There's only one good thing about this game – and that's Howard's superb animation. Otherwise this is an extremely dull exploration game. The fighting is very tedious, but more annoying is the fact that Howard can't walk 'behind' trees – he has to walk around them. It's also slow to play, even on higher skill levels, and I became incredibly frustrated when I couldn't shake loose a gang of mutants – you don't get a chance. Controlling the microlite in the second stage is also very frustrating, and so is traversing the cave in the volcano. Overall, Howard the Duck **looks pretty, but it's incredibly dull and frustrating to play.**



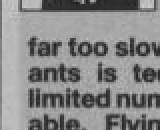
This is very good visually and aurally, and the initial impressions generated are quite good. Once it's played though, you soon realise that apple has a rotten core. The gameplay is limited, slow and very frustrating with four very limited stages to complete, and none of them are anything to thrill. The whole package is a complete waste of time. Where's the old magic, Activision?

The first part of the mission follows Howard's heroic journey across the island. First he has to find his back-pack which dropped off during the parachute drop. He then has to make his way around the island to a volcano, home of the Overlord. Throughout the journey hazards are encountered: mutant slime has to be jumped over, and mini-mutants pop up from mole-hills and try to capture Howard. Mutants can be dispatched with swift, well aimed kicks, and jumping on the mole-hills stops mutants emerging.

If Howard manages to reach the foot of the volcano he is automatically strapped in to his microlite and has to fly over the mouth of the volcano and parachute in. His flight is made hazardous by the crosswinds which affect the craft's course.

The penultimate section involves a dangerous run through a crumbling cave where falling stalagtites and holes in the floor impede the duck's progress. After traversing the cave, Howard meets the Overlord in a final, deadly confrontation. The evil kidnapper must be shot three times with a neutralizer pistol, whereupon he dies. The volcano must then be shut down by pulling on the lever which sits behind him.

A tricky task – and just to make things worse it has to be completed in thirty minutes . . .



I found Howard the Duck **quite absorbing – for ten minutes anyway. The pace is far too slow, and fighting mutants is tedious with such a limited number of moves available. Flying the microlite is incredibly frustrating, and after playing for an hour or so I came away feeling irritated, disgusted and somewhat cheated by the whole thing. Why this is multi-load I don't know – there's just so little to it. Activision ought to give up producing poor quality licensed games and continue from where they left off . . . writing original, quality products like** Park Patrol.



PRESENTATION 78%
Four skill levels and reasonable packaging. Silly multi-load though.

GRAPHICS 80%
Well drawn sprites and backdrops.

SOUND 76%
A good tune plays when you complete the mission and most of spot effects are neat.

HOOKABILITY 37%
Initial quite appealing, but not very addictive.

LASTABILITY 18%
Frustratingly slow and limited gameplay.

VALUE 9%
Severely overpriced for such a limited game.

OVERALL 19%
Another licensing disaster which should be avoided.

SKY RUNNER

Cascade, £9.95 cass, £12.95 disk, joystick only

By the 24th century man had colonised the stars. Millions of human beings left Earth for what they thought would be new and greater things. Some chance – the majority of colonists were forced to live and work in appalling conditions, which resulted in crime and violence. After attempting to cure this disease and failing, governments were forced to introduce drugs into the water supply and atmosphere to calm the masses. This drug – Sky – reduced the populus to a state of apathy, but peace reigned and all was considered well . . . until news of the drugs reached Earth.

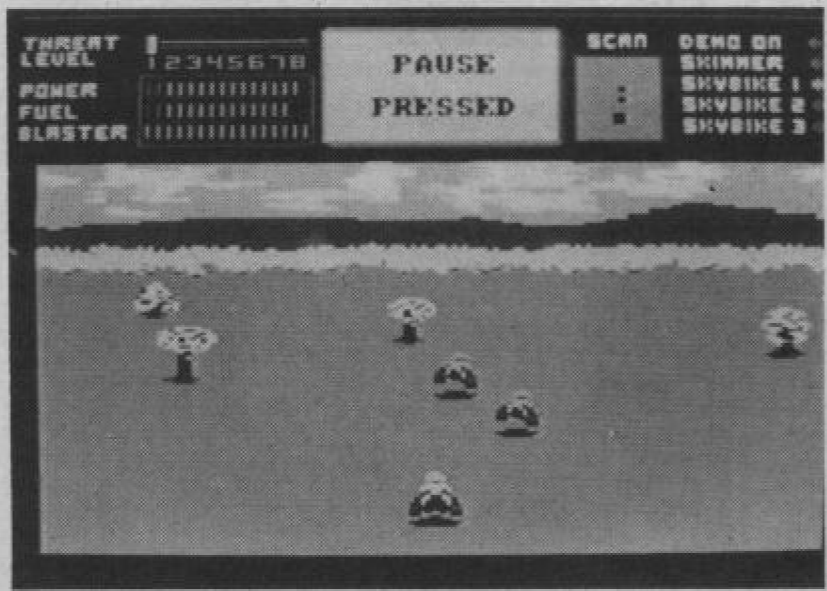
Disgusted by the mistreatment of the colonists, Earth's government decided to attack the arborious planet of Naibmoloc where the Sky factories are based, operated by 'Sky Runners'. A 'Runner Squad' was quickly formed and transported to the surface of the planet, ready to undertake a daring mission.

You play a member of the Runner Squad and can take part in one of nine increasingly difficult attacks, the level being selected before play. A balance of $50,000 is given and money is earned by eradicating anything involved in the production of Sky.

First, a low-altitude fighter has to be flown over the planet's surface and the tall defence towers destroyed. The main display area shows a 3D view of the action with the fighter in the foreground. Pushing forward on the joystick accelerates the fighter and left or right banks it. Fuel and missile levels are displayed at the top of the screen as diminishing bars. If either supply runs low, it is automatically replenished and the price deducted from your bank balance.

The towers defend themselves by firing missiles and if these hit the fighter, or the fighter crashes into a gun tower, the mission is over. When the defence towers have been destroyed, a jet-biker can be dropped onto the forest floor where the attack continues. Enemy bikers patrol the forest and have to be wiped out before an attack can be made on the harvester that collects and processes the raw material for Sky. But the enemy bikers are fast – and armed! They shoot you on sight and weave in and out of trees in an attempt to make you crash. Allied bikers also patrol the planet, and accidentally shooting one results in $2000 being deducted from your balance.

When it comes to destroying the Sky-producing harvester at the end of a level, a small silhouette of the harvester appears at the top of the screen, and an arrow indicates its weak spot which must be shot. A congratulatory message rewards a successful demolition run, and you are free to begin the next, more difficult attack.





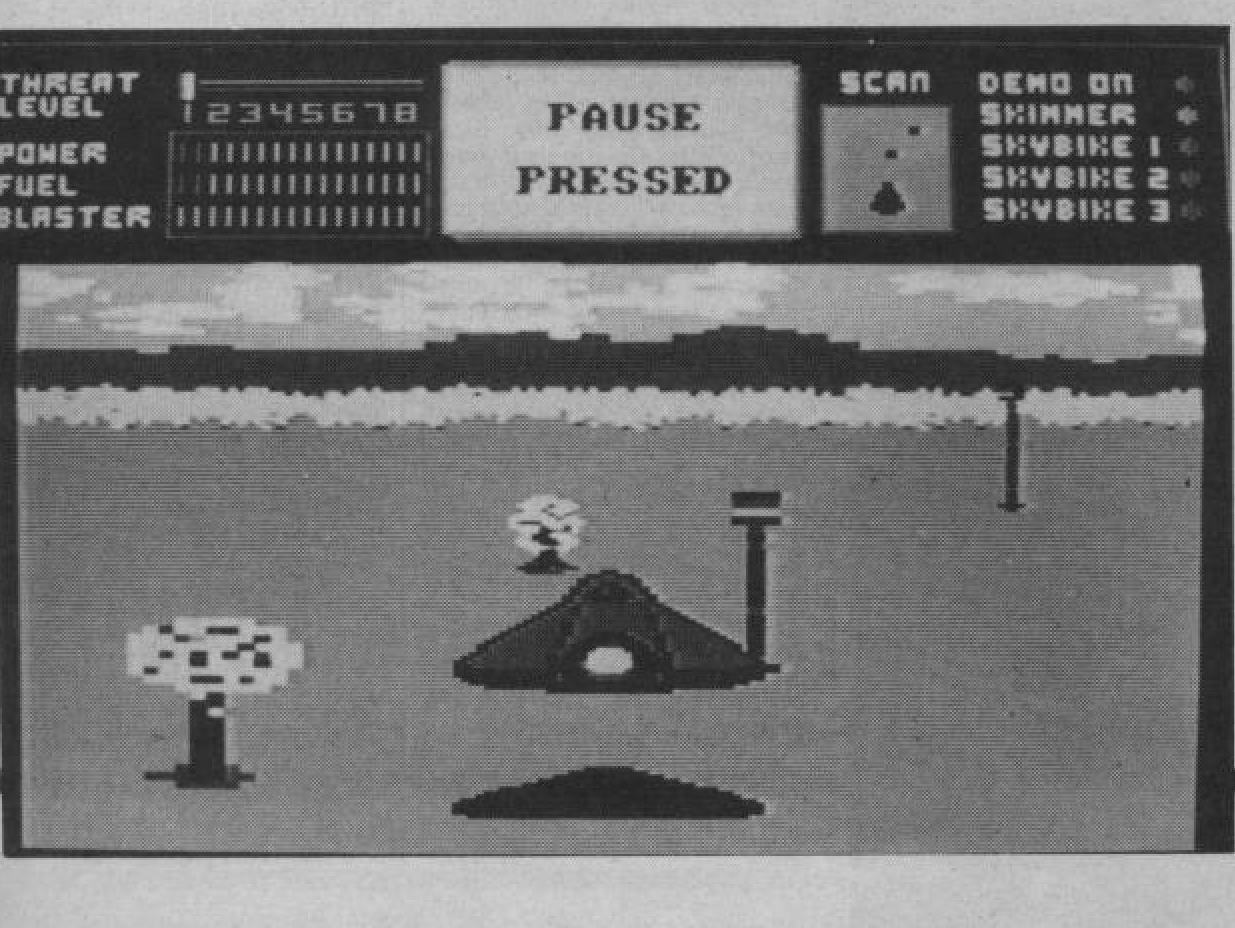
What a shame! Sky Runner **is beautifully presented with some absolutely stunning graphics and atmospheric sound but is completely let down by its very boring gameplay. The three sections are very simple and the novelty of shooting the denizens disappears alarmingly quickly. Another minus point is that the graphics are used to give a sense of exhilaration, but the feeling wears off after a few games and as soon as that happens the whole program falls flat on its face. It's such a shame there isn't more depth or variety to support** Sky Runner**'s superb features – as it stands it becomes tiresome after very few games. You may feel otherwise, but I'd strongly recommend you think long and hard before shelling out a tenner.**



Sky Runner **is a simplistic but highly enjoyable and playable game – once you get used to the very sensitive controls! Knocking out the security towers is fun and becomes relatively simple after a few goes – that is until you try level eight at night! Skimming through the trees on the sky-bike is great fun – being based on the scene in the 'Return of the Jedi' film, it captures the same sort of excitement and tension as you whip in an out of trees attempting to blast the bad guys.** Sky Runner **is a straightforward, addictive shoot 'em up, with superb graphics and suitable sound FX.**



Unfortunately Sky Runner **isn't what it could, and should have been. The superb, albeit unoriginal scenario hasn't been completely wasted, but it's a shame that it didn't spawn something really special.** Sky Runner **is tremendously playable – speeding through the forest on a Sky-Bike in pursuit of enemy bikers is incredibly exhilarating, especially on Level Eight which is dark! The pace is fast, the 3D graphics are brilliant, and the sound effects are wonderful. But sadly, there's not enough variety or depth to justify the price tag.**



PRESENTATION 94%
Nine skill levels and professional in-game information.

GRAPHICS 96%
Fabulous: crisp sprites and an incredible 3D effect.

SOUND 83%
Dire title screen tune but superb spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 92%
Instantly exhilarating and addictive.

LASTABILITY 39%
Not enough depth or variety to captivate.

VALUE 42%
Expensive for what it offers.

OVERALL 58%
A brilliant concept wasted on a mediocre game.

ZZAP! TEST

JUDGE DREDD

Melbourne House, £9.95 cass, joystick only

In a huge Mega-City of the future where crime runs rampant, there patrols an elite force of law enforcers known as the Judges. Each Judge patrols a part of the city and is responsible for cracking down on crime in that area. The player takes the role of the city's top officer – Judge Dredd. He has to carry out law-enforcing duties and keep crime levels to a minimum – failure to do so results in his expulsion from the force.

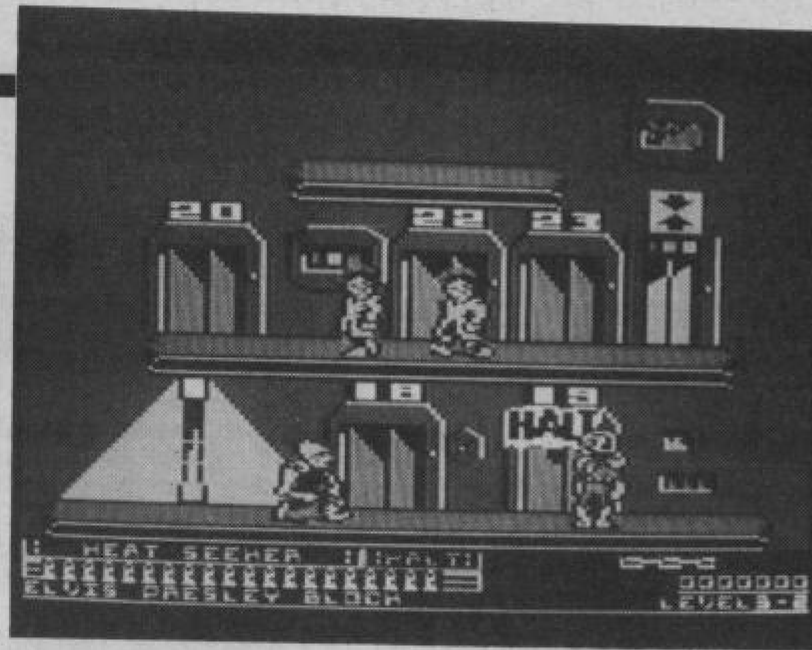
The action begins with the appearance of a map of Dredd's beat, as shown on the control panel of his Lawmaster motorbike. Crimes are reported and appear as boxes on the display. Moving a cursor onto a box and pressing the fire button takes Dredd to the vicinity of the crime.

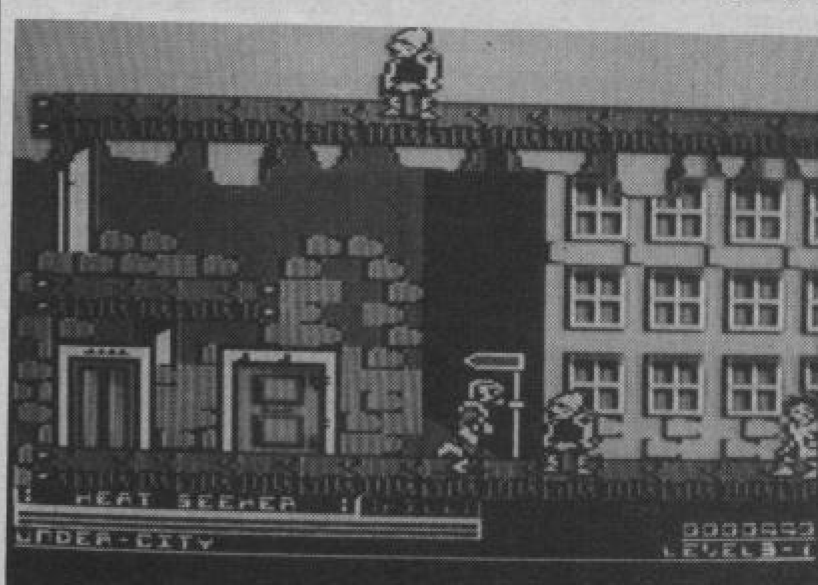
The city is divided into sections, displayed as platform screens filled with innocent bystanders – and occasionally perps (criminals). As Dredd moves from location to location the screens 'flick'. Sometimes a screen is filled with marauding robo-dogs or renegade spy satellites which attack Dredd on sight, depleting his energy. If Dredd's energy loss is absolute, his current investigation is aborted and the screen returns to the Lawmaster display.

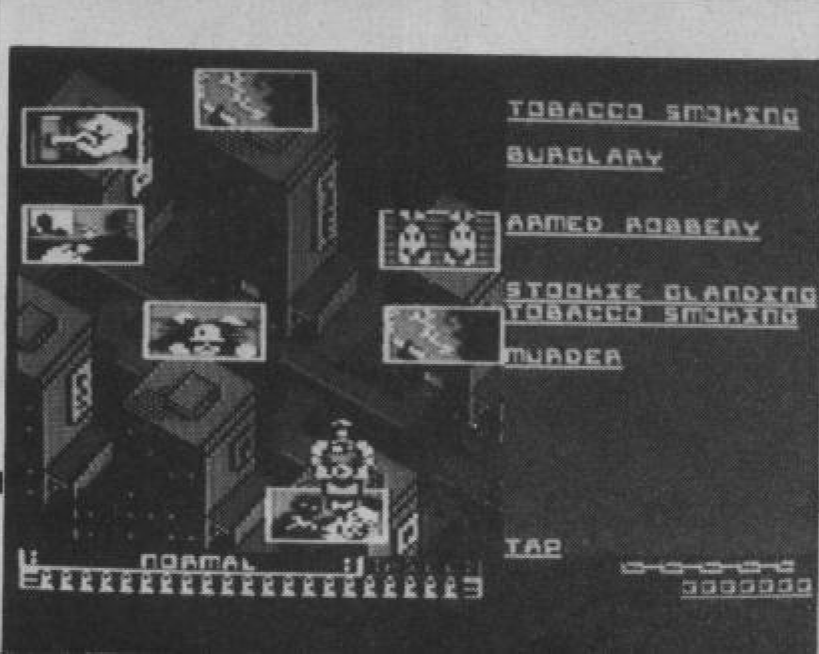


Melbourne House have wasted a potentially outstanding concept by producing a bland and very tedious platform game cum shoot 'em up. I am not impressed in the slightest. The graphics and sound are completely unrepresentative of the character and situations featured in 2000AD – and so is the game itself. I was thoroughly disgusted and bored with the whole thing after a few plays. Subsequent plays led to extreme revulsion. Judge Dredd **is quite simply the worst licensed game I've seen on the 64 – a heavily sarcastic 'well done' to Melbourne House.**

Dredd has to explore the screens in search of perps by running along and jumping from walkway to walkway, or by using the lifts to take him down to the more inaccessible screens. Central control informs Dredd of the whereabouts of the perp in question, and using this information he can track down the violator. On sighting a perp Dredd can either fire a warning shot or ask him to halt. If neither technique has any effect, Dredd has to take more drastic action and shoot to kill. His Lawgiver pistol fires six different types of ammunition: normal, armour piercing, incendiary, ricochet, high explosive and heat seeking – the latter five being limited in their supply.









I've always thought there was immense potential for an official Judge Dredd **computer game, what with the fantastic stories, powerful characters and fabulous backdrop of Mega-City One. Obviously Melbourne House don't agree because they've produced a travesty – a complete load of bull which fails on all counts to capture the atmosphere of the character. The gameplay is appalling, especially when you consider all the different aspects of Mega-City One life which could have been combined to produce a superb game. No imagination has been used in this – it's just simple and immensely repetitive chasing action, set across a series of very similar backdrops. The graphics are absolutely terrible: Mega-City One is a garish mess, where the laws of perspective have no meaning and the sprites are badly animated. The characters lack definition and detail, and Judge Dredd doesn't even look remotely like the comic character which he is supposed to represent - he's been reduced to a trite group of pixels which leap about a series of crude platform screens like a demented kangaroo. There aren't any spot effects and the soundtrack that plays throughout is annoying to the extent that it's essential to turn it off before your eardrums pack their bags and leave. It's a real shame to see a licence with so much potential being totally wasted – but it has, and there's nothing anyone can do. Apart from not buy the game, that is.**



I'm immensely disappointed with this – Judge Dredd **is such a versatile character and I'm shocked that he hasn't been implemented in a more exciting and involved game. The graphics are a bit on the naff side – some of the 2000AD artists should have been drafted in just to make things that little bit more authentic. The characters are badly drawn and some of their poses are very iffy (Dredd isn't usually camp, so why have him standing with his hand on his hip?). I honestly doubt that this will appeal to even the most die-hard Dredd fan.**

When the perp is 'removed', the screen returns to the Lawmaster display, allowing Dredd to investigate the scene of another crime. If at any time the level of crime in Dredd's sector rises above eight crimes, he is removed from duty and the game ends.

PRESENTATION 69%
Atmospheric but somewhat confusing instructions. Reasonable in-game presentation.

GRAPHICS 30%
Gaudy, garish backdrops and badly defined and animated sprites.

SOUND 37%
An annoying tune plays throughout.

HOOKABILITY 21%
Offers little in the way of enjoyment or satisfaction.

LASTABILITY 14%
Unoriginal and unrewarding gameplay leads to complete dissatisfaction.

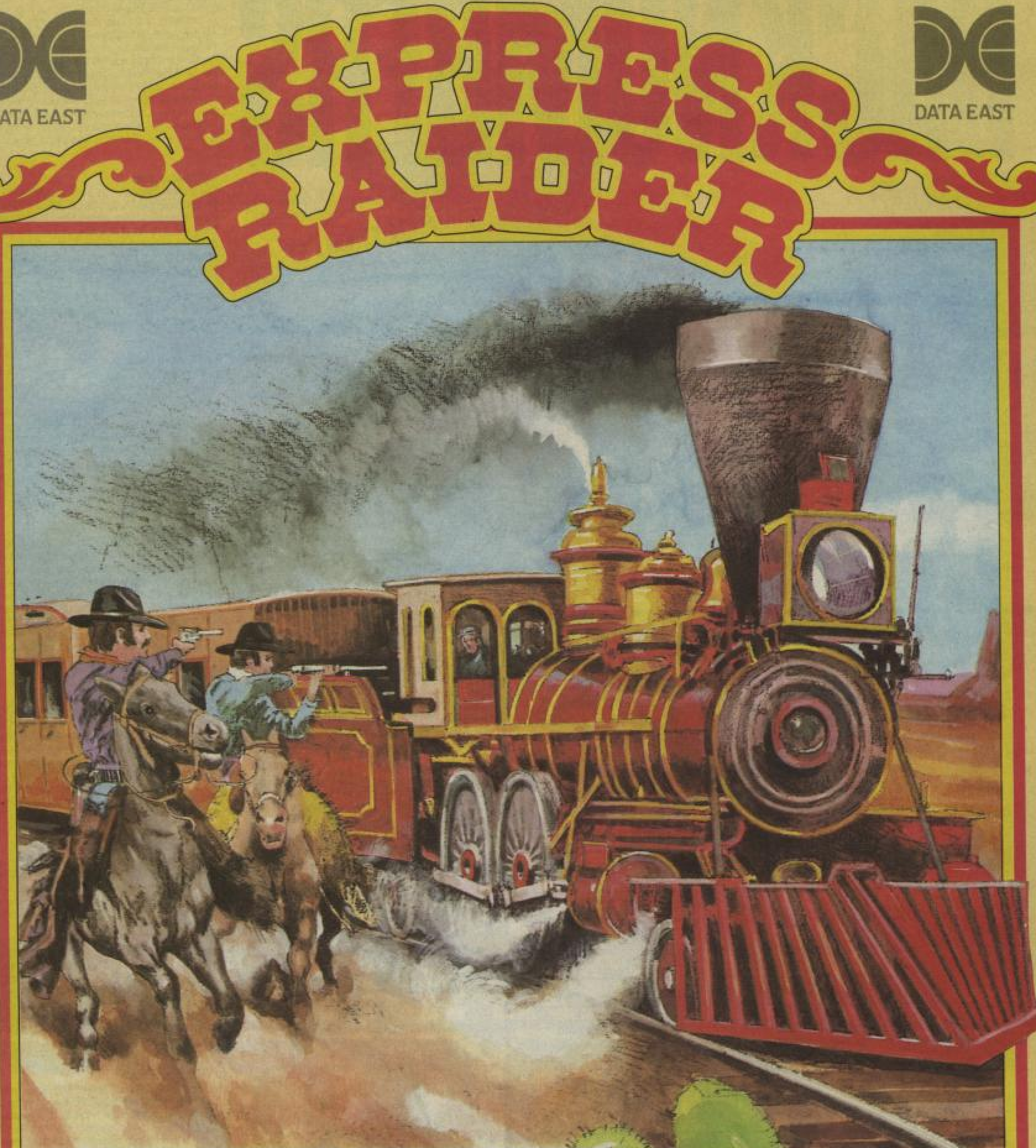
VALUE 8%
Grossly overpriced for such a simple, boring platform game.

OVERALL 13%
An immense disappointment considering the massive potential of the character.

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LOS ANGELES SWAT

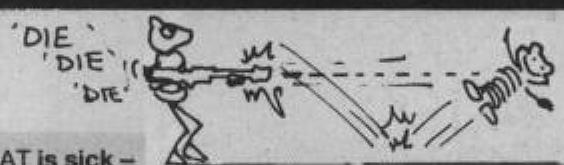
Mastertronic, £1.99 cass, joystick or keys

A huge gang of terrorists has taken over the west side of Los Angeles – it's up to you and your crack SWAT team to clear the streets and save the hostages who are being held by the gang. Your squad consists of three SWAT officers, each armed with a powerful Uzi machine gun. The gang has no automatic weapons, but they do wield clubs and throw petrol bombs.

The screen scrolls vertically with the action. The aim is to make your way to the cross-roads at the end of the street and defeat the gang which attacks *en masse*. If all the violators are disposed of the gang leader appears, complete with hostage. Shoot the gang leader (but not the hostage) to gain bonus points – shooting the innocent victim loses points.

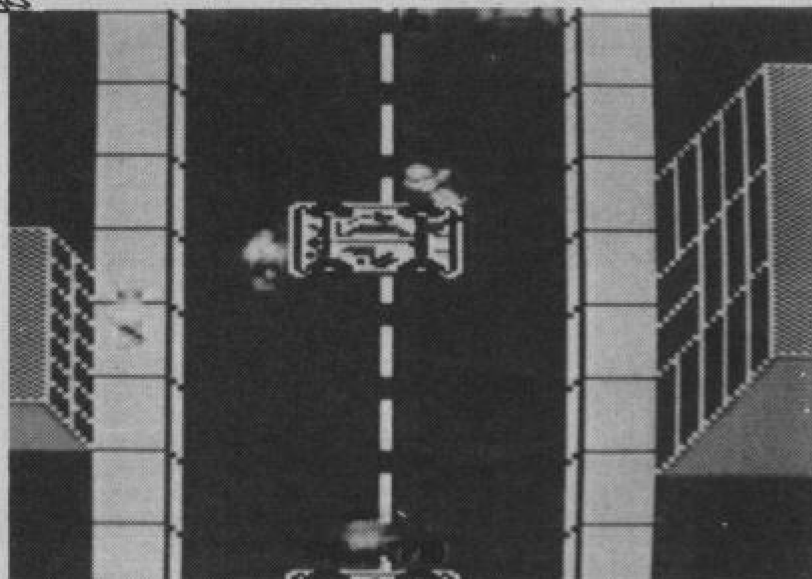
Progress to a junction is hampered by marauding do-badders which attempt to club your SWAT man to death. Some even throw petrol bombs, although they occasionally blow themselves to bits! Rooftop-based snipers are positioned along the route and take pot shots at you. A hail of gunfire has to be avoided as the sniper can't be killed.

Innocent OAPs also roam the streets and points are lost when one is accidentally shot. The action carries on in this fashion until all your team are dead – the road is long and the gang is eager to wreak havoc.



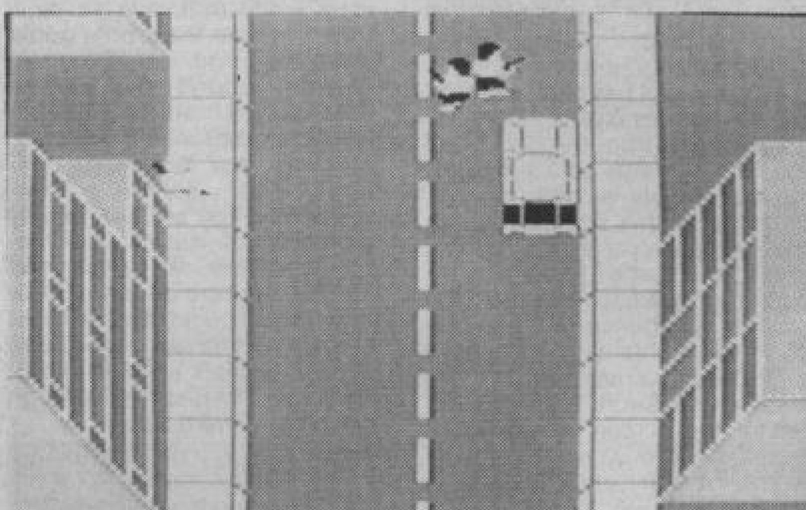


LA SWAT is sick – and I love it. The graphics are quite crude, but they work well enough, and the tune played during the game is abysmal. But it's all such fun – mercilessly gunning down gangs, and sometimes innocent bystanders, certainly made my day. Occasionally monotonous, but highly playable and cheap enough to warrant a purchase.



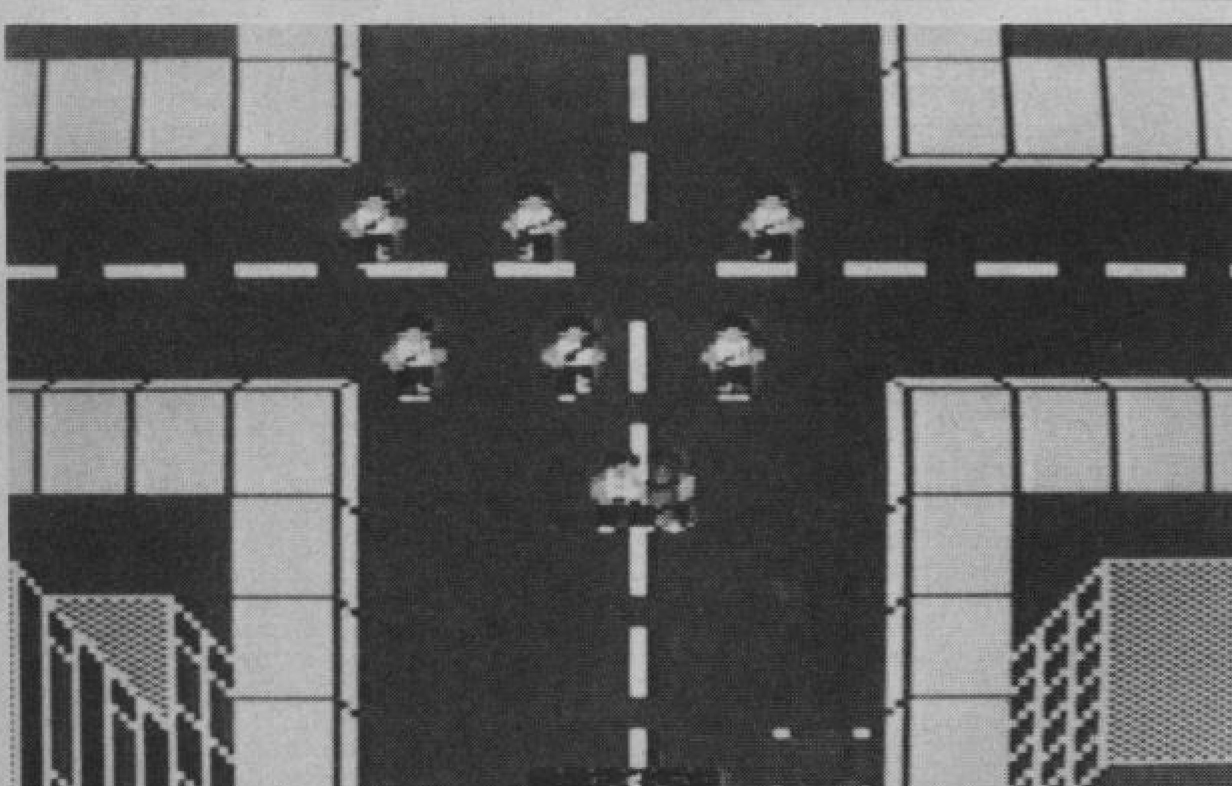


If I was a pompous prat I'd moan on and on about the morals of gratuitous violence in computer games. But I won't, because it's harmless and brilliant fun. Shooting the marauding gang members is most enjoyable, but the best bit is when a petrol-bomber fumbles his Molotov Cocktail and dies in flames. The action does get a bit repetitive, but it only costs two quid so who's complaining? Not me.





This is tasteless beyond belief, but great fun. Shooting down hundreds of men seems like a totally sick thing to do – I suppose people will drone on about how immoral this is, but after all it's only a computer game and you're doing nothing more than a little spriticide. The graphics aren't exactly brilliant, but they work well enough. The sound is a bit dull though. LA SWAT is great fun to play, and at this price it shouldn't be missed.



PRESENTATION 71%
Reasonable title screen and a high-score feature.

GRAPHICS 56%
Nothing outstanding, but they clearly display the proceedings.

SOUND 29%
Simple spot effects and a dire tune.

HOOKABILITY 82%
Oozes appeal from the first burst of lead.

LASTABILITY 62%
The going gets tough, although a little repetitive.

VALUE 86%
Lots of gratuitous binary violence for a pittance.

OVERALL 74%
A cheap and very playable vertically scrolling shoot 'em up.

ARCTICFOX

Ariolasoft, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys

An alien task force has landed in the Arctic and started to build giant oxygen converters to change Earth's atmosphere to what they consider to be breathable ammonia and methane. Naturally this stunt would lead to the extinction of mankind, so the aliens must be stopped before they can get the converters fully operational.

The aliens have defended their beachhead very well and the only way they can be defeated is if the special *Arcticfox* assault tank goes in solo and completes a series of hit and run attacks. Guess who's driving the tank... You, dear reader – so slip on your boiler suit, thermal knicks and crash helmet and prepare to save the world.

The program has four different skill levels: enemy preview, training mode, beginner and tournament. The first two levels allow you to see what you're up against and shoot at the alien craft without fear of reprisal. The other two levels are proper games, with the beginner level having fewer alien resources, less aggressive opposition and more reasonable weather conditions than the tournament level.

When a level has been selected the screen displays a 3D vector graphic view from the cockpit of the tank. A status area surrounding the window includes a radar, the speedometer, a readout giving the oxygen level in the atmosphere, the game clock, a compass, and a damage indicator. The relative importance of these displays varies, but all of them have to be used if you are going to complete your mission. At the bottom left of the screen are six icons which can be accessed via the keyboard to initiate the following combat activities: fire guided missile (you are given control over the missile for the duration of the flight and the screen displays a view through the missile's nose camera); drop mine; rear view; cannon inclination, and reverse and dig in (hide in snowdrifts).

The tank can drive up and down the hills and mountains littering the arctic landscape. However it can't drive across crevasses – attempting to cross one wrecks the tank and results in the termination of both the game and the human race. Electric storms make an occasional appearance as do arctic blizzards, and they severely reduce visibility. This is when radar comes in handy.

The aliens have constructed a range of installations while setting up camp, and their ground craft and flying machines patrol the vicinity. There are three types of ground vehicles: Recon Sled, Light Tank and Heavy Tank – their firepower and aggression increases accordingly. Ground installations include Rocket Launchers, Radar Stations, Oxygen Converters, Communication Forts and Main Forts, while flying artefacts consist of fighters, Recon Fliers and floating mines. The priority you have on these targets varies, but ultimately all the alien machinery needs to be destroyed if the world is going to be rendered a safe place to live once more.



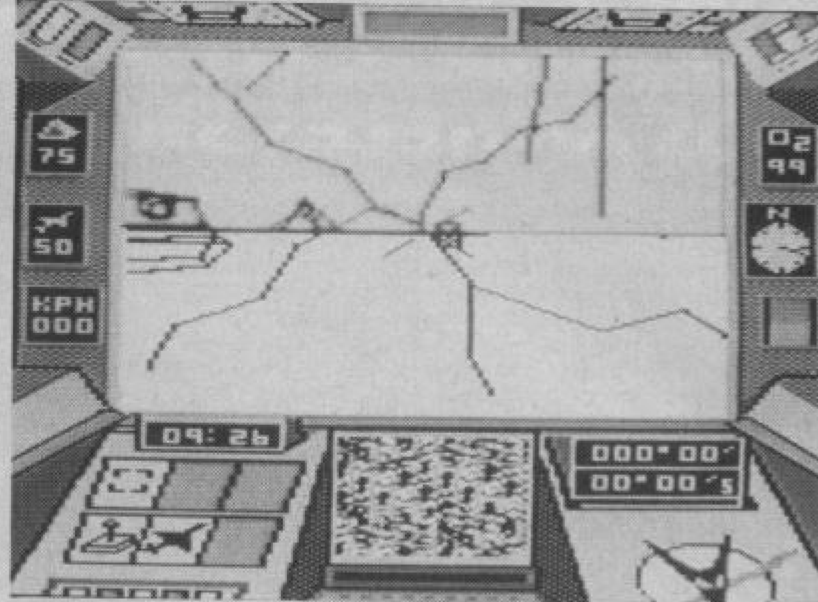
Nice idea – shame about the execution. The big drawback with this is that you spend most of your time wandering around the snowscape not actually doing much, and when the action happens it's all in slow motion. The graphics are adequate and the sound sums up Polar conditions nicely – nothing more than white noise. A game like this would be fine on a more powerful machine – the graphics, and consequently the action, would be a lot faster. On the 64 however, it's just too sparse and dull to be worthwhile.

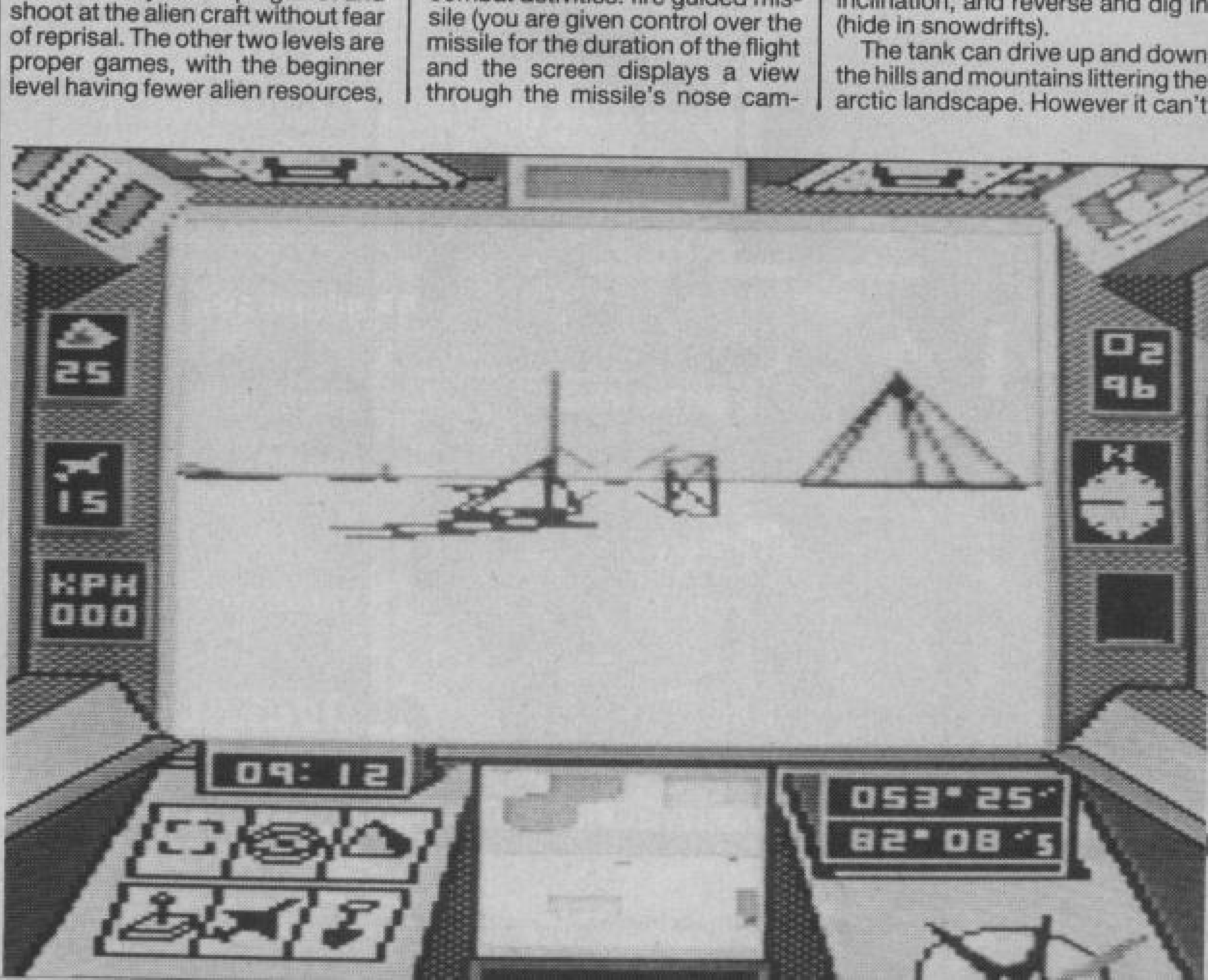


Arcticfox **is a tiresome, uninspiring, and unrewarding** Battlezone **clone. The action is slow and very tedious due to the (yawn) speed of the vector graphics, and there's nothing innovative about the gameplay. To make matters worse it's multi-load. Ridiculous. If you want a fast, playable** Battlezone**-type game forget** Arcticfox **and get Novagen's** Encounter **instead.**



With the exception of Encounter, Battlezone **clones have never been very good on the 64, so I wasn't really expecting much from this. I got less than I bargained for. I found** Arcticfox **boring to play from the very start – the action is so slow that it makes the whole game pointless and monotonous. Moving around the playing area is often confusing as your tank is unresponsive and there are very few landscape features on screen. Consequently, you are denied any indication of motion. The vector graphics are slow and blocky, and the sound is poor – no music, and spot effects are few and far between. Quite simply, there's nothing about** Arcticfox **to justify the high price tag. Give it a miss.**





PRESENTATION 71%
Four different difficulty levels and comprehensive instructions. Annoying multi-load system though.

GRAPHICS 56%
Slow and ineffective 3D vector graphics.

SOUND 7%
Sparse and simple spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 54%
The instructions tell you exactly what to do, but the action isn't immediate.

LASTABILITY 38%
Slow gameplay combined with insufficient depth, variety and playability.

VALUE 29%
Not enough action to justify the price tag.

OVERALL 35%
An uninspiring and dull *Battlezone* variant.

BOMB JACK II

Elite, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys

The caped crusader of the bomb-disposal world is back in another weird and surreal adventure. This time however, it's not bombs that need to be collected but pots of gold, scattered throughout forty different screens. Bomb Jack has changed too – he's abandoned his cape and wears a blue leotard instead of his red one. He can still leap great distances and run around at high speed, but now he has the ability to fight.

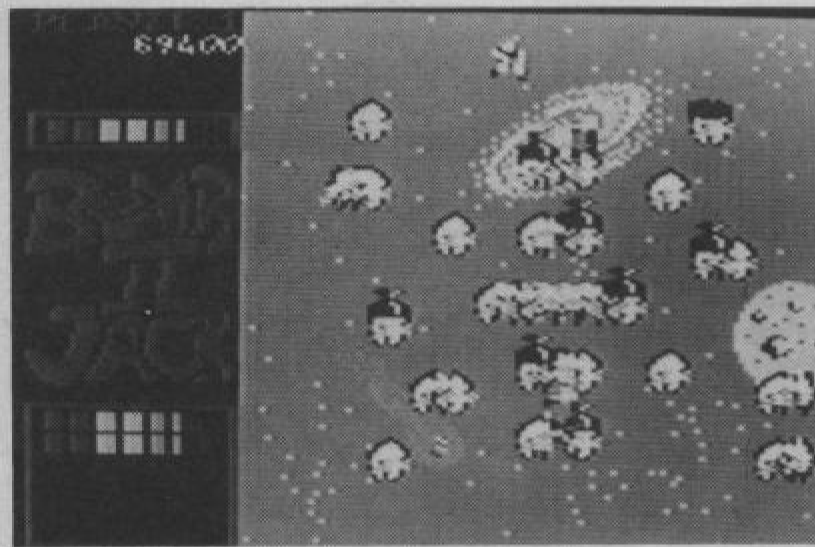


Bomb Jack **was something of a disaster on the 64 as it never really captured the flavour of the arcade game – mainly due to the fat graphics which restricted the playing area somewhat. This 'sequel' however, is much more impressive and playable – and it's not based on an arcade game! The music is good and the graphics are adequate – small, colourful and reasonably well drawn. But neither aspect is important because the programmers have designed a very playable game. Frustrating at times, but highly addictive and compulsive. My only gripe is the price, which does seem a mite excessive for such a simple game. Still,** Bomb Jack II **is worthy of consideration – especially if you enjoyed its predecessor.**



I'm amazed! This is really great – infinitely better than the original! The graphics are very good, a little small really – but very colourful nevertheless. The sound is fine and the program plays extremely well. It's not really compulsive at first, but when you get into the action it becomes incredibly addictive – I found myself playing for hours on end. If you're willing to fork out the cash, you'll be buying one of the best collect 'em up games around. It just shows what can be done when you try something original instead of churning out converted arcade games which were never designed to be squeezed into a Commodore . . .

Each screen features an arrangement of floating platforms on which ten pots of gold reside. Jack leaps from platform to platform collecting these pots, but he can only move about if the platforms are in line with one another. When the first pot is collected another flashes, and so on. If more than six flashing pots are collected, bonus points are awarded up to a maximum of 25,000. An extra life is given for picking up ten flashing pots.

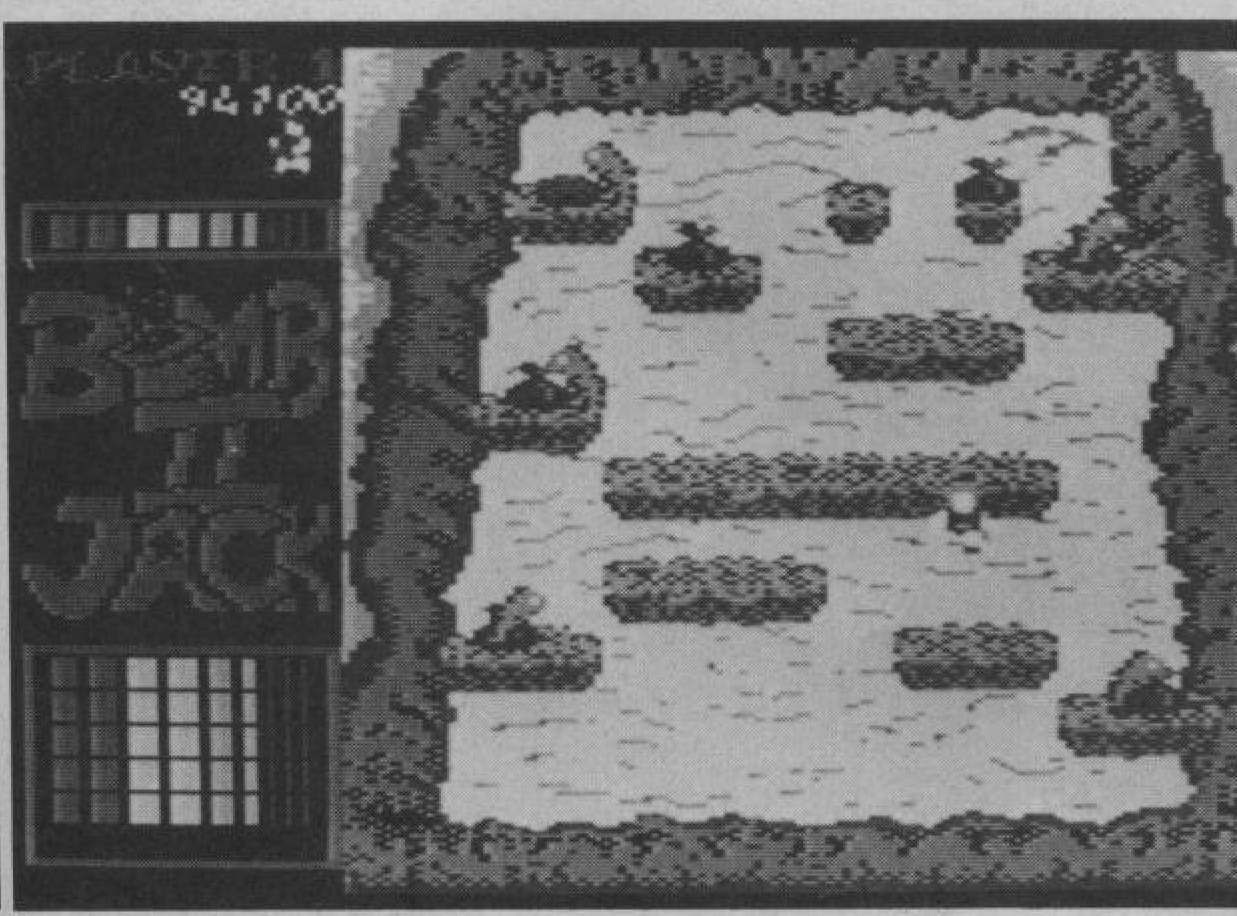


Jack's life is made a little more difficult by the creatures inhabiting the platforms – their number ranges from two to six, varying from screen to screen. Starting off as dinosaurs, they mutate every fifteen seconds or so, and become tougher and more vicious until they eventually gain the ability to jump and chase Jack around the screen. Touching creatures depletes Jack's energy, shown as a diminishing bar. When this reaches zero, one of Jack's three lives is lost.

Fortunately, Jack can be defended by pressing the fire button and moving the joystick towards the creature, pushing it away from him and maybe even off the platform. Fighting expends energy though, so a wise Jack avoids too much conflict. When a screen is completed, Jack's energy is restored to its maximum, and the monsters return to their primary dinosaur form.



I didn't like the first Bomb Jack **game and I'm not exactly impressed by this. Rushing around collecting the pots of gold is great fun at first, but I really don't think the action has enough variety to keep you playing for long. The problem is that the screens look the same and they only change in their layout – there are no new monsters or features to look forward to. The graphics and sound aren't bad at all, and the game is reasonably challenging, but I can see the its novelty wearing off rather quickly. Not bad, but far from exceptional, especially at the price.**



PRESENTATION 83%
Pretty attract mode, two player mode and joystick or keyboard option.

GRAPHICS 61%
Small sprites and straightforward backdrops, but very pleasant and effective all round.

SOUND 70%
Wallpaper backing track, twee title screen tune, and decent spot effects.

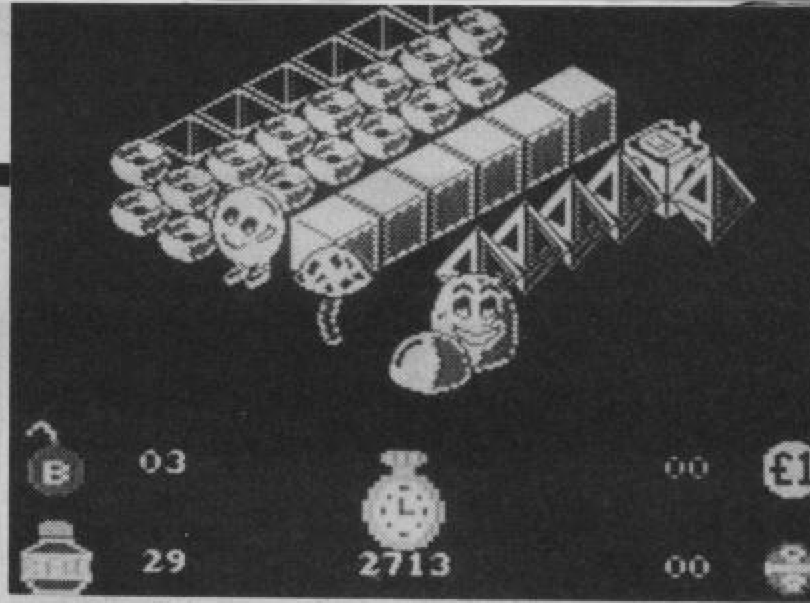
HOOKABILITY 85%
Deceptively tricky collect 'em up action gives instant pleasure.

LASTABILITY 78%
Forty frenetic levels of leaping and collecting.

VALUE 68%
Overpriced, but great fun.

OVERALL 80%
A simple but addictive game which puts its predecessor to shame.

ZZAP! TEST



MOLECULE MAN

Mastertronic, £1.99 cass, joystick or keys

By a strange twist of fate you have suddenly become Molecule Man – a round ball on legs, trapped within a nightmarish maze contaminated by radiation. All around you, abstract shapes block your every move. A clock is counting down, and the radiation is gradually shortening your life. The only way to escape is by teleporter. However, there's a problem – you can only use the teleporter when sixteen circuits have been found and installed in it. These circuits are scattered around *Molecule Man*'s huge 3D maze, and are the key to escape – and survival.



If you're into arcade adventures then this program certainly offers plenty, especially as it's only a couple of quid. Escape seems impossible at first, as Mr Molecule constantly runs out of radiation pills, but once you know your way around the place you can plan your route properly – mapping is essential. If you find it a bit too hard there's always the maze designer which allows you to make things easier, or even to construct your very own Molecule Man **maze. The 3D is effective, and characters move quite quickly when compared with other games of this ilk. Definitely worth a look.**



This seems to be a good month for budget titles. We've had LA SWAT, Park patrol **and now** Molecule Man **which is really playable. I found it quite hard to get into at first – collecting money for pills is real hassle, although after a few goes you get a 'feel' for the game and mentally mapping the playing area becomes second nature. The thing that makes this game for me, apart from the graphics which are excellent, is the maze-edit facility – simple, but it adds another dimension to an already good game. I thoroughly recommend this as it is well presented, compelling and cheap.**

A maze contaminated by radiation is not the healthiest place to be stuck. The only way to stay alive under these conditions is to take anti-radiation pills. Molecule Man begins with a supply of twenty tablets, but in order to survive he must eat one every few seconds, so his stock diminishes rather quickly. Fortunately, tablet vending machines are dotted around the maze – but life isn't cheap, and tablets cost money. Molecule Man came unprepared – his pockets are completely devoid of small change when he enters the maze. Thankfully the inhabitants of the maze are rather untidy fellows, as £1 coins can be found on the floor, and the dispensary is happy to exchange them for pills.

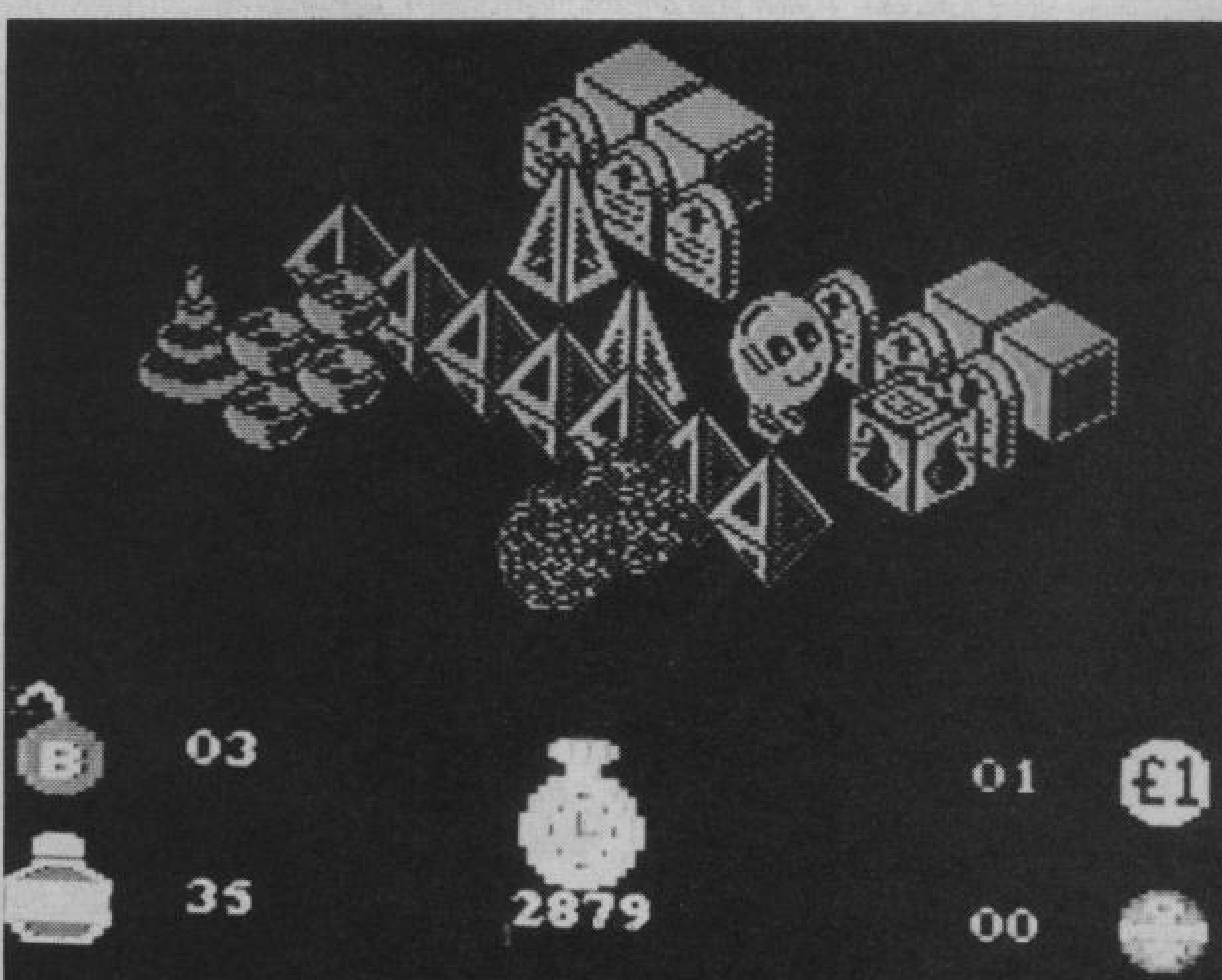
Along with money and circuits, bombs can be collected. When Molecule Man has found his money, he must decide whether to spend it on extra life-giving pills or bombs. The bombs come in handy for destroying sections of the maze walls, allowing access to new, unexplored parts. The status-report area keeps tabs on the number of bombs, tablets, coins and pieces of teleporter circuit Molecule Man is carrying.

The screen is made up of strange shapes that mark out the boundaries of the maze. These vary from traffic cones to magic toadstools – each screen is different. When you come to the edge of one screen, Molecule Man automatically trundles to the next in his search for the exit.



I found Molecule Man **slow, tiresome and quite frustrating at times. There's too much tedious exploration involved and not enough fast, immediate action, or innovative problems to solve. The single colour graphics are dull and repetitive, and the spot FX are sparse and crude. To be fair though, this type of 3D maze game bores me senseless. Still,** Molecule Man **is cheap and worth a second look – unless you feel the same way.**

The basic maze would put the Hampton Court designers to shame. However, if you become bored with the layout, an editor is provided so that you may redesign the playing area, altering objects that make up the maze to fit your requirements. The game can become as difficult as you like, and custom mazes can be saved to tape for later sessions.



PRESENTATION 84%
Good in-game presentation and an attractive, easy to use screen designer.

GRAPHICS 64%
Effective 3D, reasonable single-colour sprites and backdrops.

SOUND 18%
A few simple noises.

HOOKABILITY 71%
Initially playable, although a mite frustrating.

LASTABILITY 72%
Over 200 locations to explore, and if the going gets tedious there's always the maze designer.

VALUE 79%
A bargain for only two quid.

OVERALL 69%
A decent 3D maze game which should appeal to arcade adventurers with a low budget.


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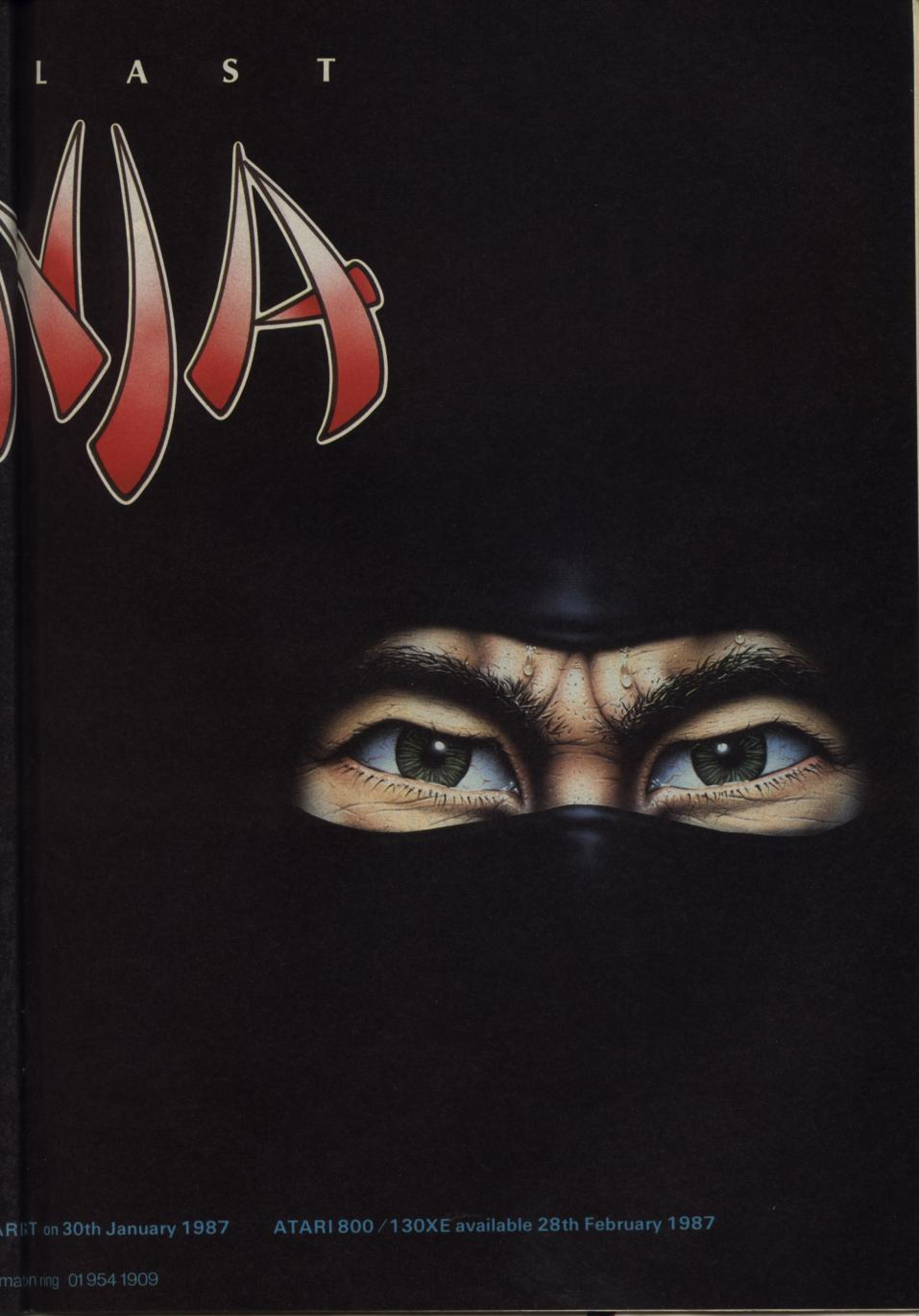


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BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE CHINA
© Twentieth Century Fox

SIGMA SEVEN

Durell, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys

What happens when one of those robotised factories that floats around in space is no longer needed? After all, a man in Earth Head Office can hardly reach out to an instrument panel and press an 'off' button . . . for one thing the factories are over 100,000 light years away. Worse still, they were constructed with an in-built protection system, designed specifically to stop rival companies shutting them down. No, the only way companies can silence these obsolete hulks is by employing men like you (a freelance Robot Factory Deactivator) to roam the Universe in your compact space fighter, shutting these installations down as it becomes necessary.

Deactivating a factory involves the completion of three different tasks. First, the factory's automatic defence system has to be negotiated. The screen scrolls diagonally as the fighter approaches the factory and defensive mines home in kamikaze-style in an attempt to destroy what they consider to be a hostile intruder. There are three back-up craft, one of which is lost if these mines strike home. The fighter can move left and right to avoid the onslaught, and shoot bursts of laser fire which destroy the mines on contact. Travelling far enough into the defence system brings you to the factory where the fighter automatically lands.

The next task involves clearing the factory floor of 'power dots', using the remote control drone made available for the job. The screen displays a 3D forced perspective view of the factory's interior which scrolls as the drone moves along the power dot filled tracks. Your craft can't fall off the path, but crashing into one of the drones trundling around the maze-like system of tracks loses another reserve craft. The dots are picked up by travelling over them, and when enough are cleared a display at the top left of the screen flashes white. The drone can then be moved to either end of the factory to complete the screen.

During the clearing period some of the dots are impossible to pick up – and the remaining dots form a pattern which must be remembered if the third and final stage is to be completed. A panel appears containing a series of buttons. Using these, the pattern revealed in the previous stage must be recreated. This is achieved by bouncing a suspended ball on the correct buttons. This task is made more difficult by a defence force field which slowly follows your movements across the slab – if the ball is dropped onto a button guarded by a force field, another craft is lost. A button can only be activated if it is flashing yellow – if it flashes any other colour the ball has no effect.

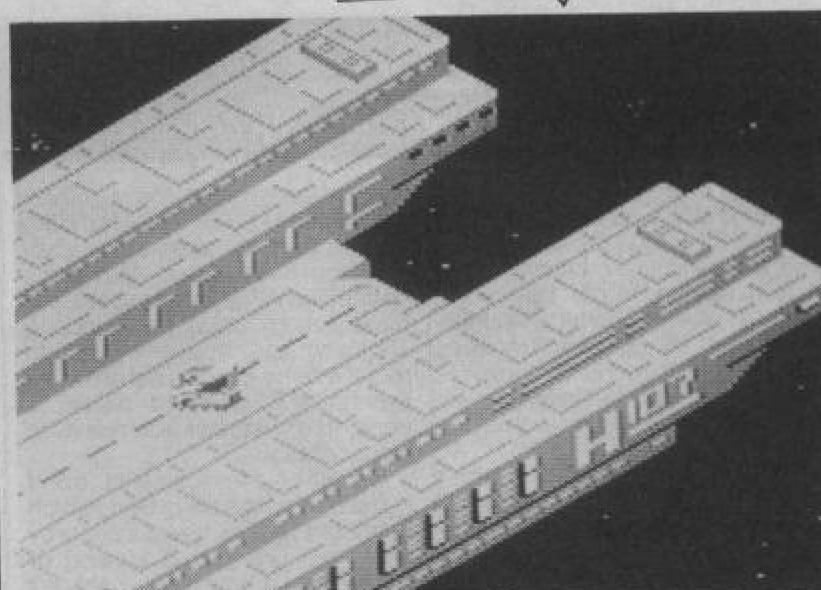
When this puzzle is negotiated and the correct pattern inserted, the factory is considered shut down. Bonus points are awarded and you are automatically moved on to the next, more hazardous factory. The action continues in this fashion until your supply of ships runs out.



Sigma Seven **combines three completely different game formats: a Zaxxon-style shoot 'em up, a sort of scrolling** Pac Man **and an arcade puzzle. The result is an enjoyable little game. Graphically this is quite neat with some nice touches, like the starfields which scroll by on the first stage. It's pretty reasonable in the sound department too. The only problem is in the game itself. The three sections might be diverse, but going through them again and again does become a little repetitive as there's no real change in the action – it just speeds up and the robots get busier. Still, for a tenner it isn't too bad.**

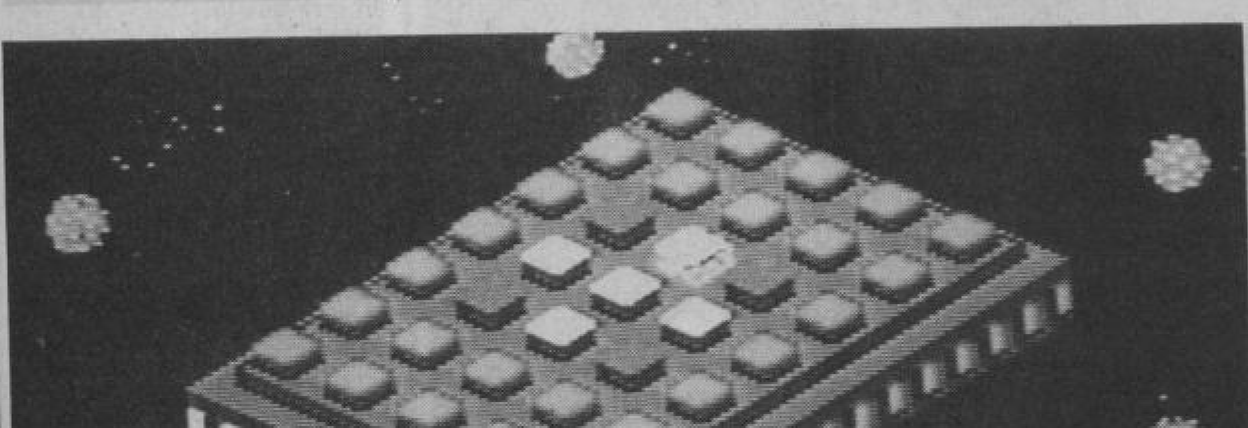


I really like this – it has three neat mini-games all of which are very playable and addictive. My personal favourite is the second section which is a cross between a scrolling Pac Man **and a shoot 'em up. The other two sections aren't quite as good but are equally challenging and enjoyable to play. The graphics are really crisp and clear with a beautiful starry backdrop on the** Zaxxon **stage and some neat sprites on the second section. Sound is good too, it's not amazing but suits the game well and adds atmosphere to the action.** Sigma Seven **is a trifle expensive, but if you're after a varied and addictive multi-screen arcade game then give it some consideration.**





As a whole Sigma Seven **isn't too bad. The three sections are graphically and aurally competent, and although lacking depth they are quite playable. I found the** Zaxxon **stage rather dull after a few games, but I do like the scrolling** Pac Man **variant and the arcade puzzle – most compelling. Far from outstanding and a mite expensive, but generally fun and worth a look.**



PRESENTATION 83%
Keyboard or joystick option and good in-game presentation.

GRAPHICS 79%
Nothing innovative but the backdrops and sprites are crisp, clear and well designed.

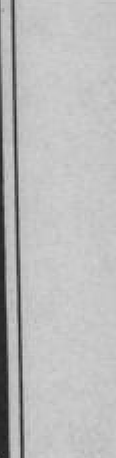
SOUND 70%
Bearable tune and suitable sound effects.

HOOKABILITY 81%
Three interesting and diverse stages give plenty of entertainment.

LASTABILITY 65%
The action gets a mite repetitive – it also gets rather hard.

VALUE 64%
A bit on the pricey side, but a worthy enough purchase.

OVERALL 70%
An unusual, competent three-stage arcade game.



ZZAP! TEST

PAPERBOY

Elite, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick only

It's six o'clock, Monday morning – time for Paperboy to start his paper round. His customers are all Sun readers – not the soar-away, topless, fascist national newspaper so despised by the more small-minded inhabitants of our realm – but the Daily Sun, a snooze-away, parochial journal of the locality.

This boring organ has scrambled the brains of Accacia Avenue's residents. They don't like Paperboy in the slightest and try to get him sacked by ruining his round. So, Paperboy plays safe by staying on his bike and throwing the newspapers at his customers' front doors. He can try to throw the papers into the post-boxes outside the houses and gain extra points. But if Paperboy misses, the paper may break a window, annoying the house owner so much that he cancels his order for the paper. Failure to deliver a paper to a customer also results in a cancellation.

Some of the residents don't subscribe to the Daily Sun, which is evident as their houses are grey and have graveyards instead of gardens. Paperboy doesn't respect this type of person and radio controlled vehicles must be avoided. Even the dogs are totally insane and attack the poor cyclist. Contact with these hazards causes Paperboy to fall off his bike and one of his three lives are lost. Hitting the kerb or a grating has the same effect.

If Paperboy manages to reach the end of the road he has to ride over a BMX stunt course. Finishing this course within the allotted time limit gives a damage bonus and a deliberately hurls papers at their windows, dustbins and gravestones in an attempt to break them. This adds to his 'damage total' which is added to his score at the end of a round.

The landscape scrolls diagonally as Paperboy makes his way along the road. The joystick is used to steer his bike, and pressing the fire button throws a paper in the general direction of a house. He starts the game with a reserve of eight newspapers. Extra supplies can be picked up en route by running over the bundles of newspapers which appear at regular intervals.

As Paperboy pedals along, the residents of Accacia Avenue



Having made it to the BMX course, Paperboy decides it isn't worth the effort and falls off his bike

Some people pick the strangest places to operate a pneumatic drill



Paperboy gets a mechanic's-eye view of the underside of a car

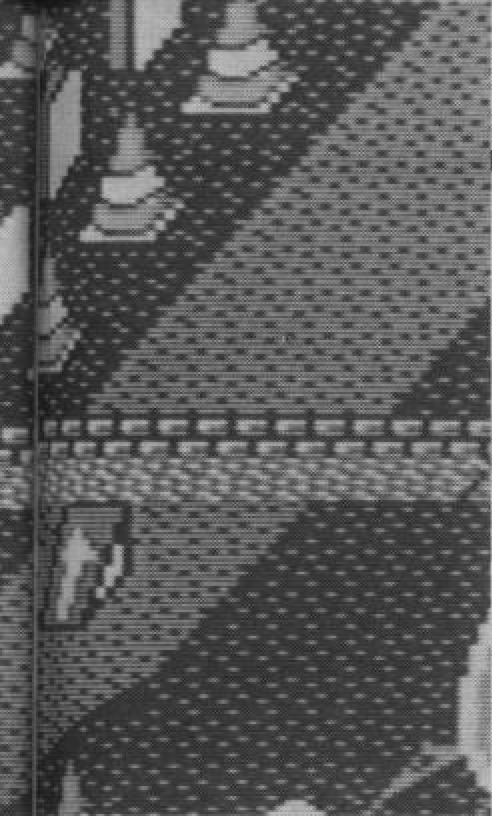




Why Elite bothered to convert Paperboy to the 64, I don't know. As far as I'm concerned it was a waste of time, effort and money. The tunes and spot FX are good, but the backdrops and sprites are rather crude, and the colour schemes are bland. The playing area is relatively small, leaving little room to manoeuvre and resulting in much frustration. Even so, Paperboy **is quite playable, but nothing special and vastly overpriced for what it offers. If Elite are going to continue releasing conversions of this quality, then they should do so at a budget price.**



Take an arcade game which relies heavily on its brilliant sound, speech and graphics to enhance its rather boring gameplay. Then remove them. What are you left with? . . . a repetitive and uninspiring arcade conversion. The graphics are awful, with poorly defined sprites and very bland backdrops. The sound is poor too – why not try to copy the tunes that featured in the arcade original? The game itself has plenty of niggles: the 'damage total' doesn't seem to work properly; the papers disappear if you try to get them on the doorsteps; the sprite/sprite collision doesn't work properly, and the actual playing area is tiny when compared with the original. A very poor and disappointing conversion.



attempt to assault him. Skateboarders, joggers, C5s, tyres, and time bonus. A map of the street is



I wasn't that impressed by Paperboy **when I saw it in the arcades, and now it's come home to roost I'm neither enthralled nor excited by it's arrival. It appears to be hit or miss whether I was killed off when I hit an obstacle – sometimes I could quite happily sail through the hazards and the next time I'd be killed before hitting it. This might have some appeal to ardent fans of the arcade game, but it left me feeling cold.**

then shown, with successful deliveries highlighted. Failure to deliver any newspapers earns Paperboy the sack (sob sob) and the game ends.

PRESENTATION 78%
No options, but reasonable title screen and high-score feature.

GRAPHICS 48%
Simple backdrops, badly drawn and animated sprites, and bland use of colour.

SOUND 79%
Good tunes and spot FX ice a poorly baked cake.

HOOKABILITY 63%
Any initial interest generated by the arcade game soon fades.

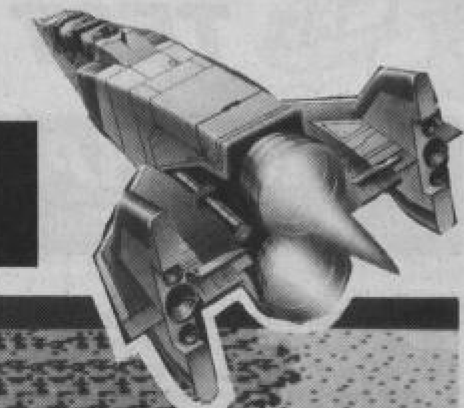
LASTABILITY 40%
The lacklustre feel and repetitive gameplay soon give way to boredom.

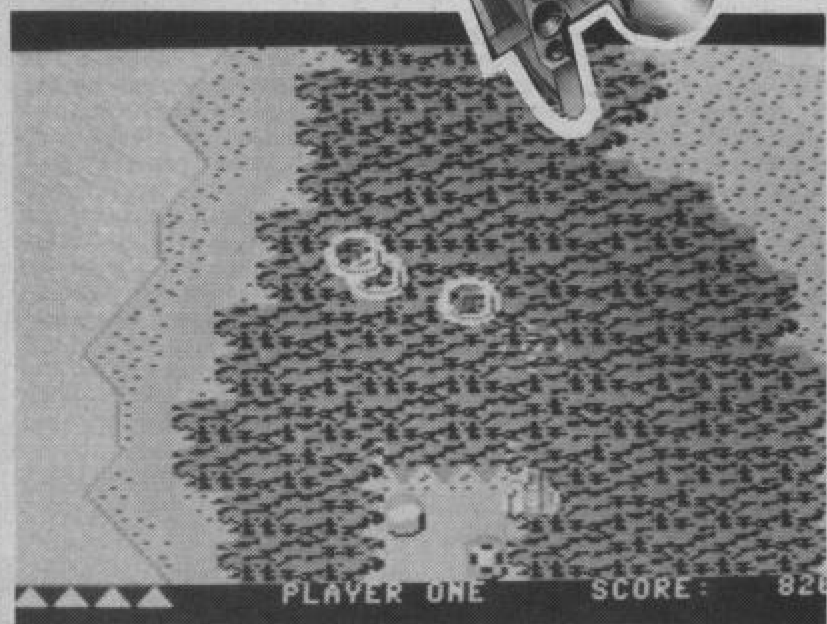
VALUE FOR MONEY 35%
Not enough variety or playability to warrant the expensive price tag.

OVERALL 44%
A dull, second-rate conversion.

XEVIOUS

US Gold, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick only





Xevious is a vertically scrolling shoot 'em up in which a lone fighter is up against an endless stream of alien craft. The battle takes place over a large forest backdrop. Alien fighters appear from the top of the screen and attempt to shoot or ram the fighter – either eventuality results in the loss of one of five lives.



The arcade version of Xevious is graphically pretty and fun to play. The official Commodore conversion however, is graphically awful and very dull to play. The background graphics are really dire and they look muddled and unclear. Colour is used most unimaginatively. The sprites are terrible, lacking colour and definition, and everything wobbles as it moves. The spaceship is very sluggish to respond to the joystick and it moves very slowly. Consequently the original game's addictive qualities are lost. Why this is so bad is a complete mystery to me – it could have been so much better, especially if you compare it with the standards set by Light Force. **If you want a good shoot 'em up forget this garbage and look elsewhere.**

Fortunately, the fighter is armed with an unlimited supply of air-to-air missiles and bombs. Missiles are launched by pressing the fire button and are used to destroy enemy craft, while ground installations can be bombed for extra points. Bombs are released by holding down the fire button and directed by using a set of sights in front of the fighter. Most ground targets are harmless and offer no resistance to aerial assault, but a few launch ground-to-air missiles – so beware.

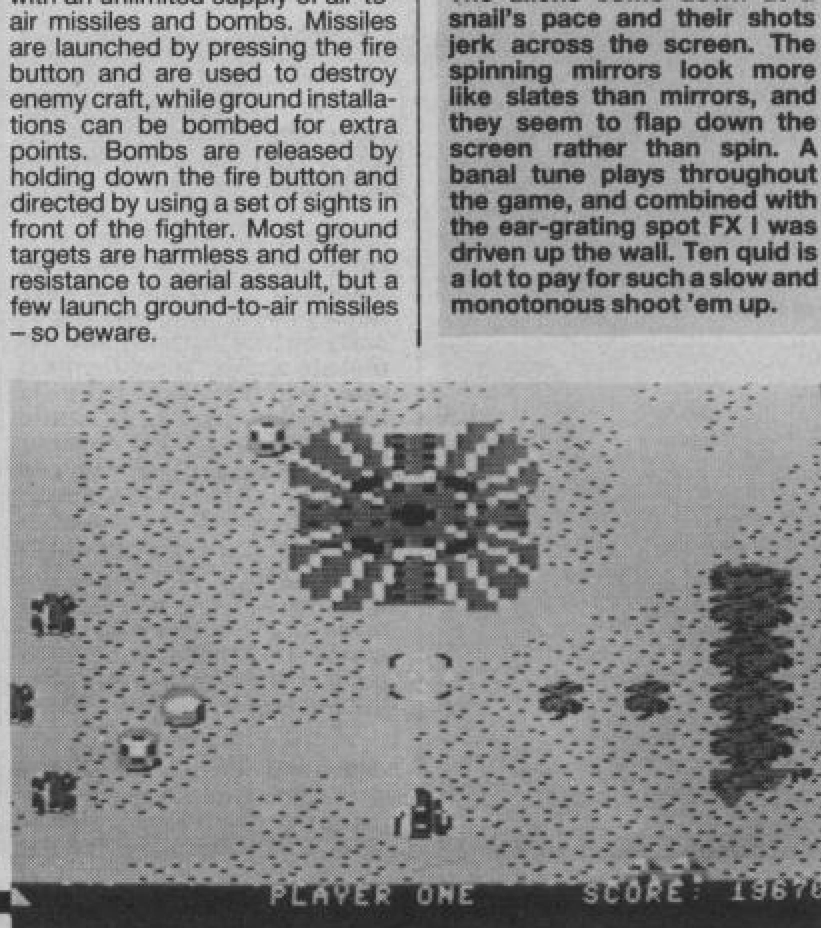
A large Mothership appears at regular intervals and can only be destroyed with a well placed bomb. Dispose of the Mothership and the mission continues, only the aliens get meaner and faster.



This is quite playable, but it's all so slow and reluctant to do anything exciting – even when provoked. It's enough to put you to sleep. The aliens come down at a snail's pace and their shots jerk across the screen. The spinning mirrors look more like slates than mirrors, and they seem to flap down the screen rather than spin. A banal tune plays throughout the game, and combined with the ear-grating spot FX I was driven up the wall. Ten quid is a lot to pay for such a slow and monotonous shoot 'em up.



What should have been an attractive and playable shoot 'em up has turned out to be bland, slow and very tedious. It's sad that US Gold have released such a poor conversion. Xevious is so suited to the Commodore capabilities – yet this conversion is incompetent. It's visually and aurally coarse, and 'feels' shoddy to play. Terra Cresta **is also quite a dull shoot 'em up, but at least it shows that this sort of game can be done effectively on the 64. If you want a decent vertically scrolling shoot 'em up, get** Light Force **– it's much more impressive and playable than this junk.**



PRESENTATION 78%
Three 'skill' level settings and a one or two player option. Pathetic title screen.

GRAPHICS 31%
Very poor backdrops, sprites and use of colour.

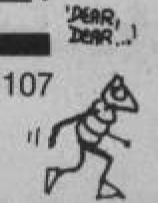
SOUND 15%
Annoying tune and poor sound effects.

HOOKABILITY 34%
Fairly playable, but tedious.

LASTABILITY 20%
Slow, unrewarding and dull.

VALUE 13%
Vastly overpriced.

OVERALL 21%
Appalling conversion of a playable arcade game.



ZZAP! TEST

SPACE HARRIER

Elite, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick only

The Space Harrier Corps was a powerful and relentless arm of Intergalactic Law Enforcement; a team of highly trained soldiers who patrolled the universe, restoring peace by using extreme force where necessary. Universal peace was eventually attained however, and the obsolete Space Harrier Corps was disbanded and soon forgotten.

Years passed, and peace reigned – until without warning, a race of warmongering aliens appeared from another dimension and took control of a small world at the edge of the universe. Not wishing this 'disease' to spread, the Intergalactic Federation reformed the Space Harrier Corps and sent them to dispose of the alien threat. But the years of inaction made the soldiers 'soft' – they were no longer suited to the speed and horrors of battle and were quickly wiped out . . . leaving a sole survivor to face the alien onslaught.

You take control of the last Space Harrier, and armed only with a powerful laser you must traverse the planet, 'cleansing' its cities of anything remotely hostile. The action is presented in first person perspective, as viewed from behind your on-screen alter ego.

Moot is the first city – its landscape consists of trees, bushes and asteroids, and alien formations sweep in and out of the screen, firing missiles. Colliding with a moving object kills you – although no lives are lost on this level as it is played against the clock which stops if you die. When the outskirts of the city are reached, a huge dragon appears. To reclaim Moot and progress to the next city, the dragon must be shot in the head until it is destroyed.

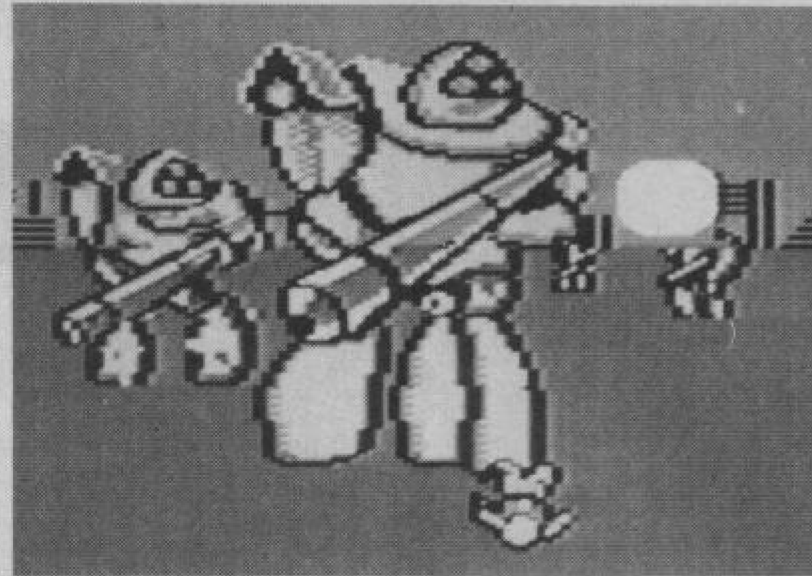
Eleven more occupied cities lie ahead of you . . . **Geeza**'s landscape is littered with stone columns which cannot be destroyed – avoid them. Large missile-spitting rock heads appear at regular intervals, with a ring of five rock heads concluding the level. **Amar** is an obstacle course, containing static pillars and flying geometric shapes, both of which are indestructible. A two headed snake-like alien has to be eradicated before you can start work on **Ceiciel**. Ceiciel is a herbaceous landscape packed with plants, mushrooms, and rampant mutant butterflies that come on the attack. These species are minded by a giant robot that hangs back at the end of the level waiting to do battle.

Next on the inter-city tour is **Ida**, a region cluttered with stone termite mounds and defended by robots, all rounded off by a snaky alien. **Revi** resembles Moot, with rock head formations borrowed from Geeza and a ring of five mushrooms at the end. **Minea**, in turn, resembles Geeza but concludes with a two headed dragon.

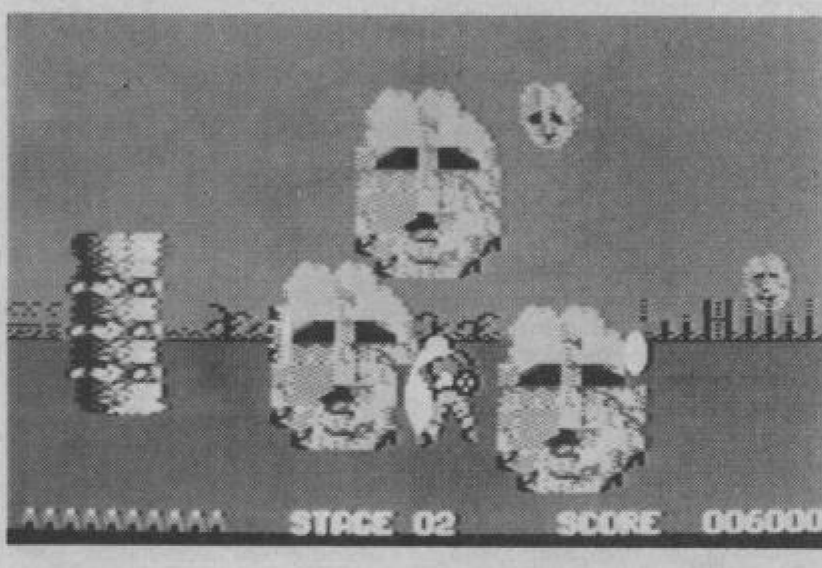
The landscape in **Drail** is identical to Amar's, but a ring of a four asteroids surround a missile-firing alien ship that lurks at the end of the level. **Asute** is a totally new scenic concept in which Harrier has to negotiate a low flying asteroid belt complete with rock heads and alien ships, before doing battle with the robot that guards the way to Vicel.

The city of **Vicel** is just like Ceiciel, except the manic mushrooms take to the air and fly fungal formations, attacking Harrier. A dragon has to be dealt with before going to **Nark**, Amar revisited, with a ring of five rock faces marking the city limits.

Harrier's round trip concludes with a flying visit to **Absymbel**, where areas of stone termite mounds are interspersed with legions of robots. By the time you've disposed of the large, two headed snake that lurks at the end of Absymbel, the alien horde has regrouped and it's time to fly back to Moot and start all over again.

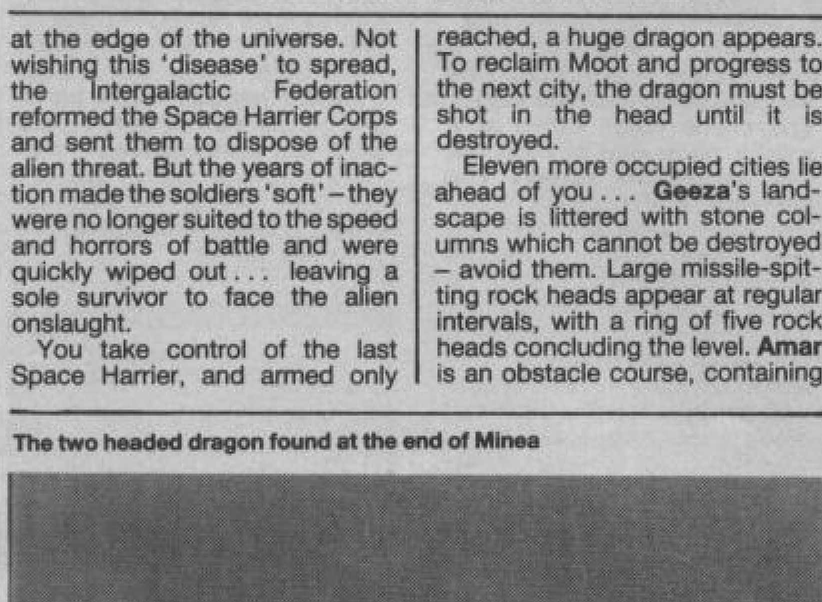


On sighting the menacing robots found on Absymbel, a shocked Space Harrier faints



Space Harrier is under attack from five chunky rock heads on Geeza

The two headed dragon found at the end of Minea





Having never played or even seen the arcade version of Space Harrier **I cannot compare the two – but if it plays anything like this I'd be surprised if anyone got very far! It's a very fast game, especially on later levels where the objects appear at an alarming rate and avoiding them is extremely difficult. At some stages it was mostly down to pure luck that I got through as there were so many things on screen that I hadn't a clue what I was doing. It's more like high speed dying than flying! The graphics are clearly defined (at close range anyway) and sound is mediocre. Overall,** Space Harrier **is quite playable, but not an essential purchase.**



I don't think that much of the arcade game, especially without the hydraulics. It's just a very simple 3D shoot 'em up with mega graphics and sound. On the Commodore it hasn't even got the fantastic graphics or sound, and some of the original features are missing, like the chequered floor and the dragon riding bit. Why are there only twelve levels, and why does the game keep on going once you've gone through them all? Why is the scoring system completely different to the arcade game? It's really annoying to get a five figure score when it should be seven figures long. Still, as a game in its own right I was surprised to find that Space Harrier **does have some addictive qualities – for a little while at least. The problem is that the gameplay is very limited and repetitive – it's the sort of game you play a for a couple of hours then never go back to it again. The graphics are very speedy, but sometimes it's very difficult to gauge exactly what's coming and occasionally the man hits something which isn't there! The soundtrack is alright, but the spot effects are dire. Overall** Space Harrier **isn't. It's nothing more than an expensive and very limited 3D shoot 'em up.**





The arcade version of Space Harrier is based entirely around effect – the beautiful graphics, speech, music, and hydraulics generate a feeling of 'being there' to compensate for the fact that the game itself consists of little more than mindless blasting. With the exception of the mindless blasting, all this has been lost during the process of conversion, and Space Harrier on the 64 is flawed. Quite considerably, in that it doesn't look or feel good to play, and there's no atmosphere. The main sprite is deformed and when he runs along the floor it looks like he's riding a unicycle! The music is fair, but the spot FX are crap – hitting something which can't be destroyed sounds like a flock of geese honking! The 3D graphics only look impressive when you stand back and look at them. During play the objects seem to 'float' on screen and don't look like part of the landscape. The overall feel is claustrophobic, and everything moves very fast to disguise the jerky updating. This, combined with the poor collision detection, results in much frustration. It's most annoying to lose a life because an inanimate object hits you once it's passed behind. Sometimes objects pass straight through as if you have just died and been given temporary immunity. Worse still though, is that when constantly firing oncoming objects are obscured by laser fire – you can't stop firing, so you usually end up running into something. It's also infuriating when an object kills you even though there's a burst of laser fire between it and you. Sadly, what Elite have ended up with is a tedious and expensive 3D shoot 'em up.

PRESENTATION 79%
Suitable loading screen and high-score table. Sparse instructions, title screen and in-game presentation though.

GRAPHICS 81%
Fast, reasonably smooth, and as a whole adequately defined.

SOUND 69%
Pleasant tunes and weak spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 73%
Initially addictive, but not overly compulsive.

LASTABILITY 41%
Quite playable, but tedious.

VALUE 38%
Expensive short-term fun.

OVERALL 45%
An uninspiring 3D shoot 'em up and a somewhat 'incomplete' conversion.

1943

American Action, £9.95 cass, joystick only

Somewhere over the Pacific a fierce battle is raging – a lone fighter plane is up against wave after wave of enemy fighters and bombers. The screen scrolls vertically as the plane under your control dodges and blasts the missile-firing enemy planes which emerge from the top, sides and bottom of the screen. A collision with an enemy plane or missile results in a loss of one of three lives. Occasionally shooting a plane yields a POW capsule which can be picked up for extra fire power.

Your three planes can 'roll' three times. Pressing the space bar makes the plane loop the loop and so avoids enemy craft and missiles. When all three lives are lost your name can be entered in a high-score table for posterity.



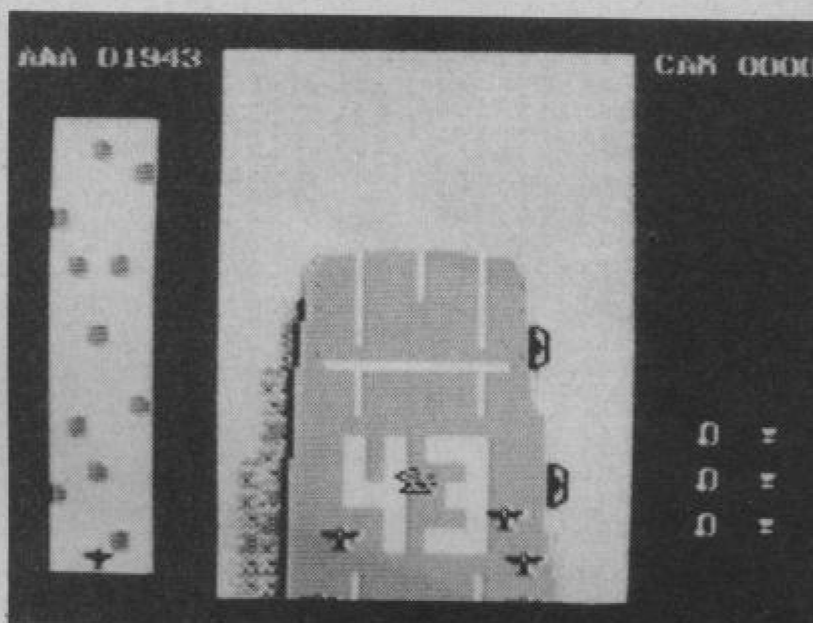
American Action have got to be joking – 1943, One Year After is year before it's not true. Clones come and go, but this one really takes the biscuit. They ought to call it 1942 – Ten Minutes Later. The graphics are a little bit smaller and the playing area has been shrunk, but otherwise it's all there – rolls, aircraft carriers, big planes . . . I hated 1942 the first time it appeared. I hate it twice as much the second time around.

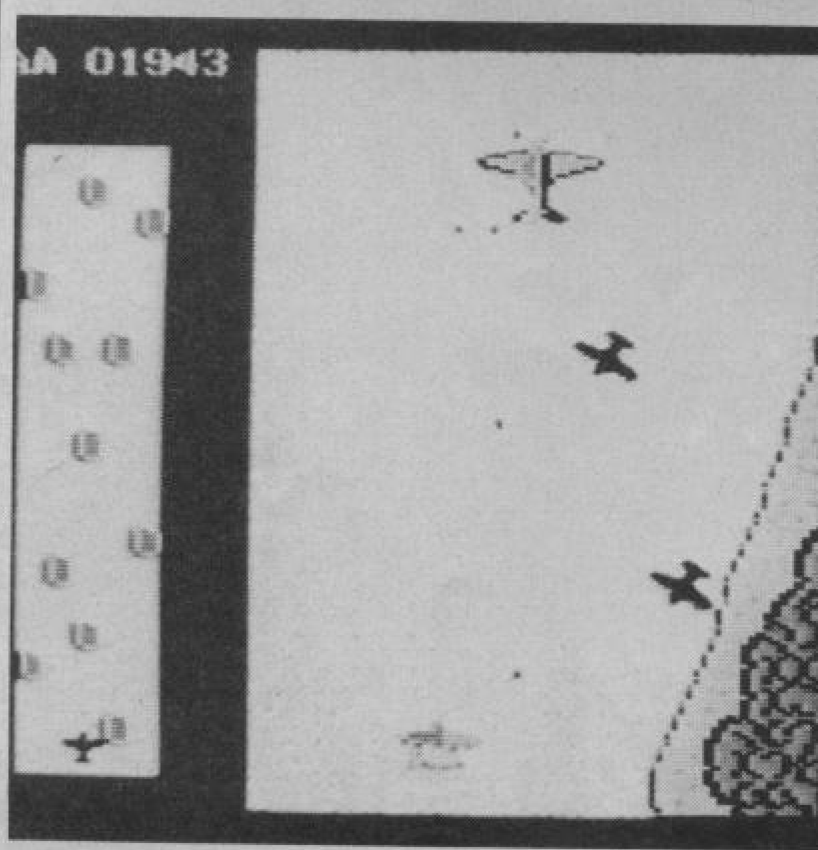


There is nothing appealing about this game whatsoever. The tune that relentlessly drones throughout is incredibly annoying, and the graphics are of the poorest standard – the enemy planes are miniscule and lack any detail. The worst thing about 1943 though, is the game itself – repetitive, unplayable and often frustrating. Ten quid is asking far too much for this sub-standard piece of software. Give it a miss.



I wouldn't have thought it possible, but the programmers of 1943 have actually written a worse version of 1942 than the official conversion. It must have taken them ages. This is less playable than Elite's offering, and looks and sounds inferior in every way. An awful tune plays throughout the game and is interrupted occasionally by weak sound effects. The enemy planes are a single colour and simply drawn, and there is hardly any backdrop to speak of. Worse still, 1943 is unplayable and very tedious with it. If American Action want to get a decent hold on the British software scene they are going to have to try harder. A lot harder.





PRESENTATION 48%
High-score table and simple title screen.

GRAPHICS 28%
Bland, unimaginative sprites and backdrops.

SOUND 27%
An irritating excuse for a tune plays throughout.

HOOKABILITY 34%
Easy to get into, but not very thrilling.

LASTABILITY 20%
Quite simply repetitive and dull.

VALUE FOR MONEY 13%
Not enough action of variety to merit the high price tag.

OVERALL 21%
A poor clone of an uninspiring conversion of a dated arcade game.

LEGEND OF KAGE

Imagine, £8.95 cass, joystick only

Spring is in the air and a young Ninja called Kage is taking his beloved, the beautiful Princess Kiri, for a quiet stroll. A lust-stricken Dragon King appears out of the blue, takes a fancy to Kiri and abducts her. Distraught, Kage decides it's time to put his Ninja skills into action and rescue the Princess.

Kiri is being held in the Dragon King's castle. To get there, Kage has to pass through four different landscapes doing battle with an army of vile creatures. Luckily the fighting lad is armed with an unlimited supply of Shuriken stars to throw at the denizens of the Dragon King's domain, backed up by a trusty weapon for close-quarter combat.



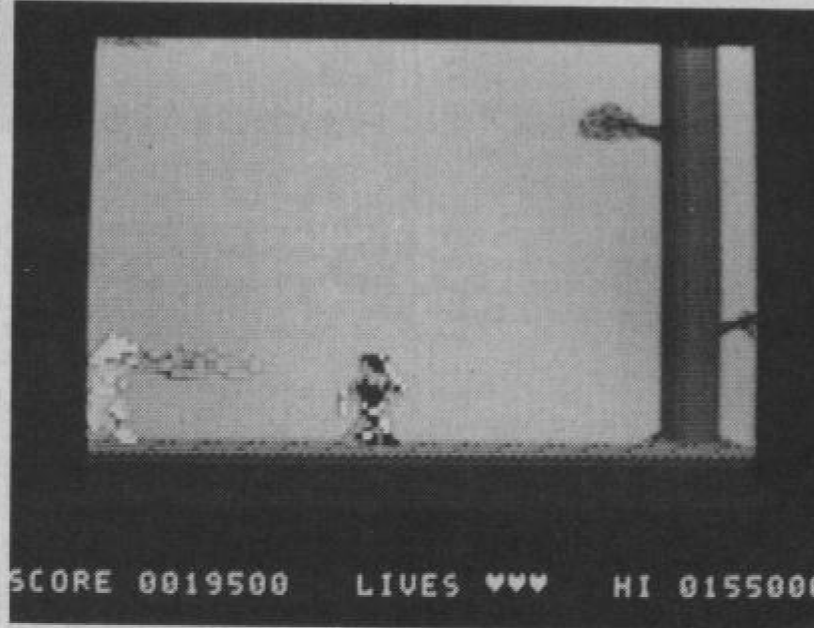
Legend of Kage **is playable and full of gratuitous violence which makes it doubly appealing. Graphically it's poor. The sprites are badly drawn and animated, and the backgrounds are simple. The sound sucks. There's a great tune on the title screen but only five sound effects during the game. It's a shame that** Legend of Kage **is so expensive – it would make a great budget game.**



Legend of Kage **is unoriginal and crude in appearance, but surprisingly playable. The action is fast, mindless, and fun. However, nine quid is asking far too much for what is basically a piece of budget-quality software. If you fancy some gratuitous violence and your pocket can withstand the strain, buy it. But it's not worth losing any sleep over.**

The first section is a scrolling forest. The hero can run left and right along the forest floor, climb trees and jump from bough to bough. The Dragon King's minions drop from the skies and attack Kage with sticks. Some throw deadly Shuriken stars which have to be avoided at all costs. A magic prayer book sits in a tree and its power is activated by picking it up and landing on the forest floor. The screen flashes for ten seconds and anything nasty that appears on screen is killed.

A fire-breathing wizard appears after three red Ninjas have been killed. Every fourth wizard is red, and if this hot-head is destroyed Kage can leave the forest and move onto the moat section. Here, the action takes place in front of the castle walls. Some Ninjas hide in the moat, while others run along the adjacent path. Ten enemy Ninjas must be defeated before Kage can scale the wall.

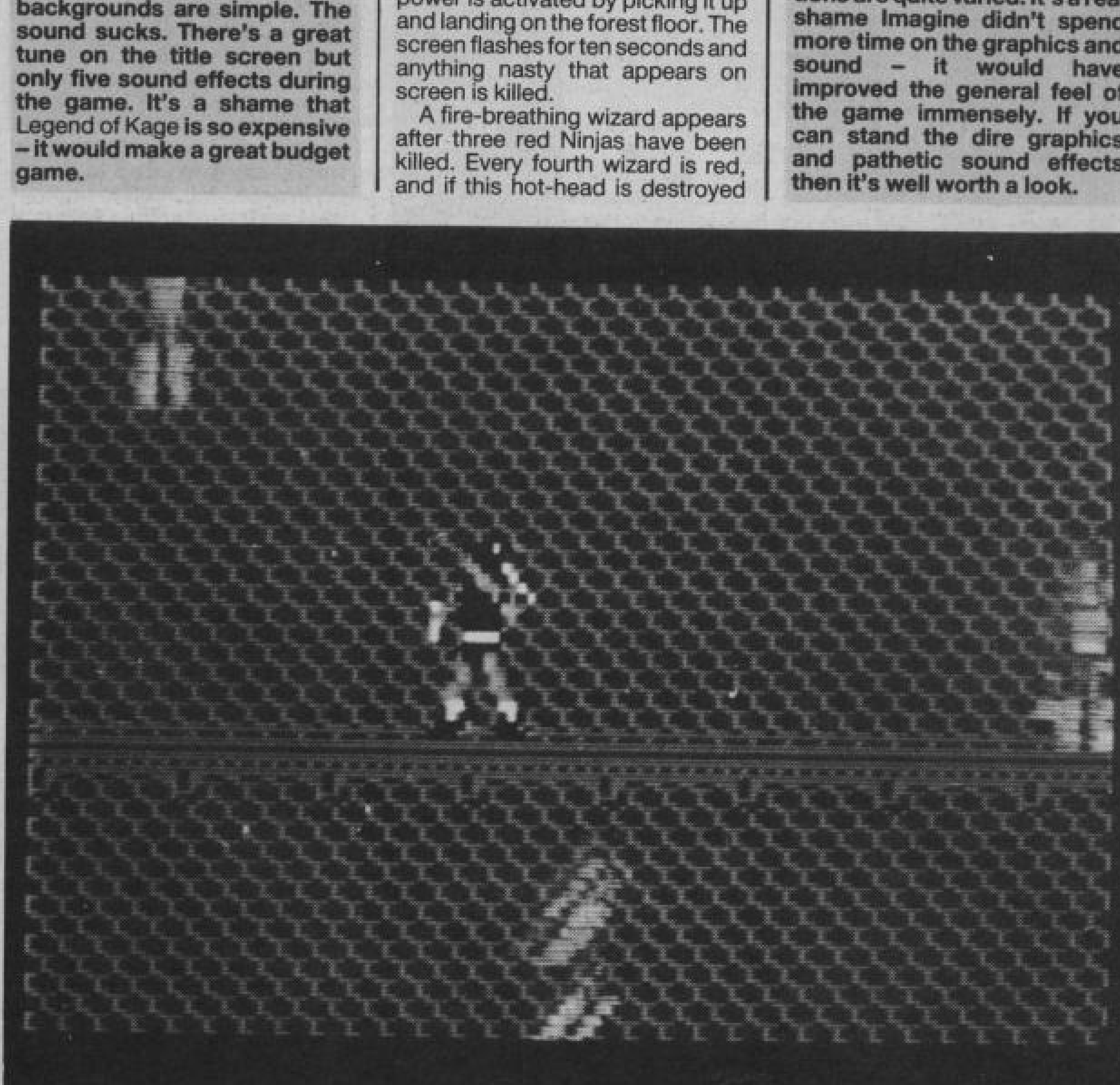




This looks and sounds absolutely terrible, and even the plot is really poor, but behind the lacklustre exterior is a pretty addictive and playable game. Running around shooting the enemy Ninjas is great fun and the different sections are quite varied. It's a real shame Imagine didn't spend more time on the graphics and sound – it would have improved the general feel of the game immensely. If you can stand the dire graphics and pathetic sound effects then it's well worth a look.

The third part of the mission involves leaping from floor to floor in the castle – the athletic Ninja has to make his way to the castle battlements, avoiding or killing the marauding minions as he ascends.

In the final part of his quest, Kage has to penetrate the Evil One's abode and search for the lovely Princess. The poor girl has been trapped in the uppermost turret of the castle. After avoiding the Ninja guards, Kage encounters the Dragon King. When he's out of the way, Kage can rush in and rescue his beloved . . . but to no avail. Just as he leaps into her arms another Dragon King appears and whisks her away! The mission begins all over again. Oh well, a Ninja's work is never done, as the ancient chinese proverb goes . . .



PRESENTATION 45%
Adequate instructions. No title screen or options though.

GRAPHICS 36%
Jerky scrolling, and badly drawn and animated sprites.

SOUND 35%
A simple tune and one or two ineffective spot effects.

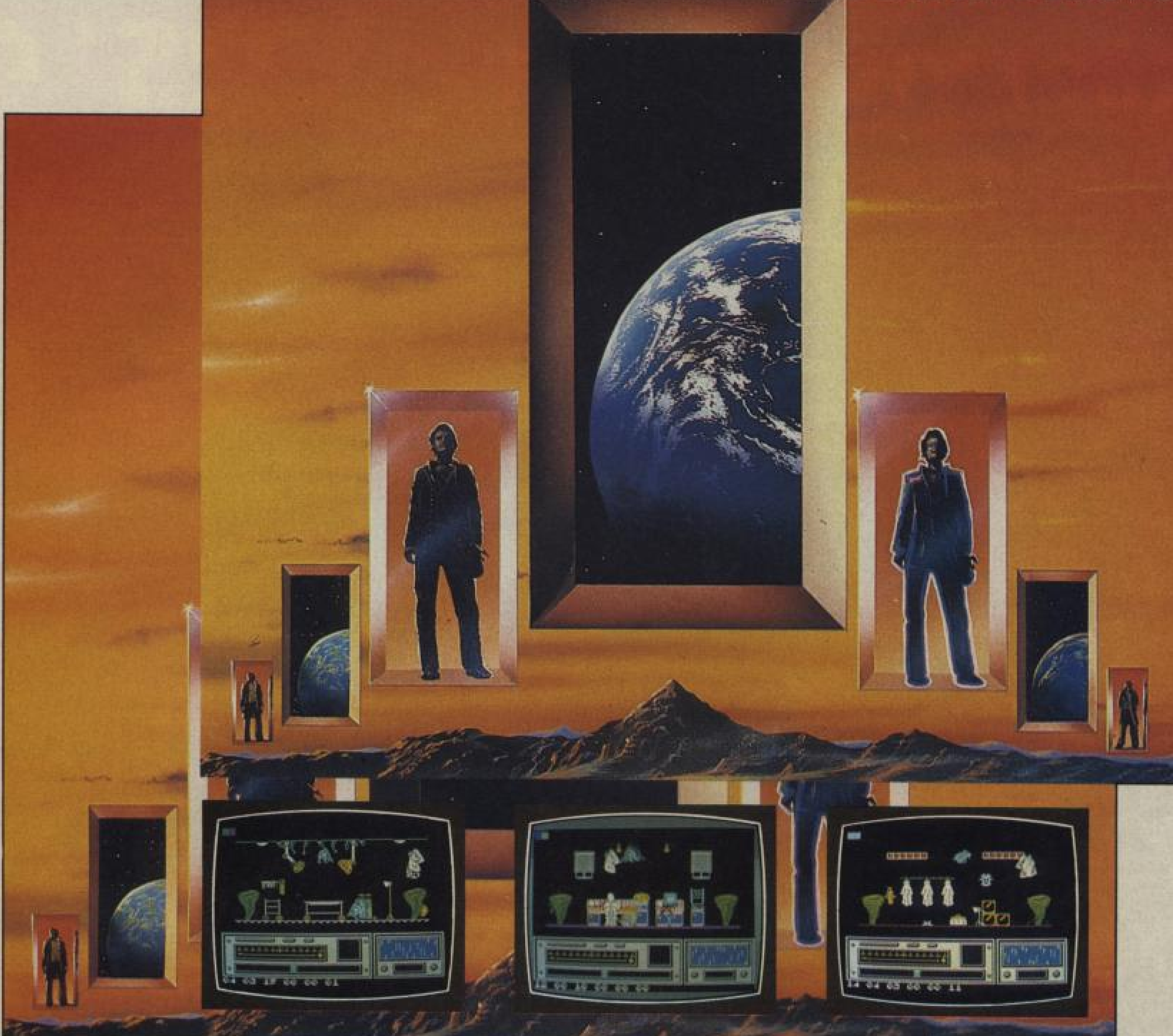
HOOKABILITY 70%
Not instantly impressive, but addictive.

LASTABILITY 59%
Four 'samey' levels which represent a reasonable challenge.

VALUE 49%
Overpriced for what it offers.

OVERALL 63%
Playable – but nothing special.

REPEL THE DOPPELGANGER WORLD OF ANTI-MATTER
IN THIS NEW BLOCKBUSTER FROM DENTON DESIGNS



Two worlds – the mirror image of each other, touch in space through a Time-Warp.

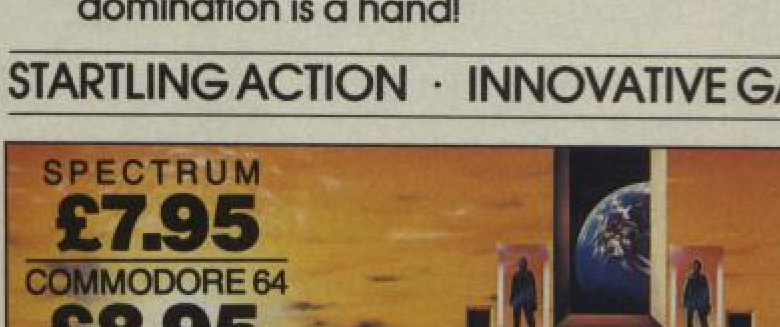
One is positive, good, familiar – our World; the other is negative, evil yet unnervingly familiar.

Their interface – a time window through which objects and beings can pass; contact has resulted in the beginning of exchange.

Restore our World – stop the invasion, but do it now, for as the exchange accelerates, the time window grows larger – domination is a hand!

DOUBLE DOUBLE TAKE

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ZZAP! READERS' CH

GAMES TOP 30

1 *(1)* **LEADER BOARD** *(12%)*
US Gold/Access, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 97%

2 *(2)* **SUPER CYCLE** *(10%)*
US Gold/Epyx, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 95%

3 *(-)* **WORLD GAMES** *(10%)*
US Gold/Epyx, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 98%

4 *(3)* **GREEN BERET** *(7%)*
Imagine, £8.95 cass
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 93%

5 *(4)* **GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS** *(6%)*
Elite, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 97%

6 *(6)* **PARALLAX** *(4%)*
Ocean, £8.95 cass
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 93%

7 *(5)* **INTERNATIONAL KARATE** *(3%)*
System 3, £6.50 cass, £10.99 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 91%

8 *(17)* **SANXION** *(3%)*
Thalamus, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 93%

9 *(21)* **DAN DARE** *(3%)*
Virgin, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 94%

10 *(25)* **ALLEYKAT** *(2%)*
Hewson, £8.95 cass, £12.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 89%

11 *(8)* **URIDIUM**
Hewson, £8.95 cass, £12.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 94%

12 *(7)* **KNIGHT GAMES**
English Software, £8.95 cass, £12.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 90%

13 *(14)* **FIST II**
Melbourne House, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 39%

14 *(15)* **PARADROID**
Hewson, £7.95 cass, £12.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 97%

15 *(-)* **GO FOR GOLD**
, £2.99 cass, £4.99 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 94%

16 *(-)* **1942**
Elite, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 58%

17 *(-)* **ANTIRIAD**
Palace Software, £8.95 cass
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 93%

18 *(16)* **SUMMER GAMES II**
US Gold/Epyx, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 97%

19 *(10)* **SLAMBALL**
Americana, £2.99 cass, £4.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 96%

20 *(28)* **DRUID**
Firebird, £7.95 cass
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 88%

21 *(20)* **THRUST**
Firebird, £1.99 cass
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 94%

22 *(19)* **WINTER GAMES**
US Gold/Epyx, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 94%

23 *(-)* **INFILTRATOR**
US Gold, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 91%

24 *(22)* **SPINDIZZY**
Electric Dreams, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 98%

25 *(11)* **MERCENARY**
Novagen, £9.95 cass, £12.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 98%

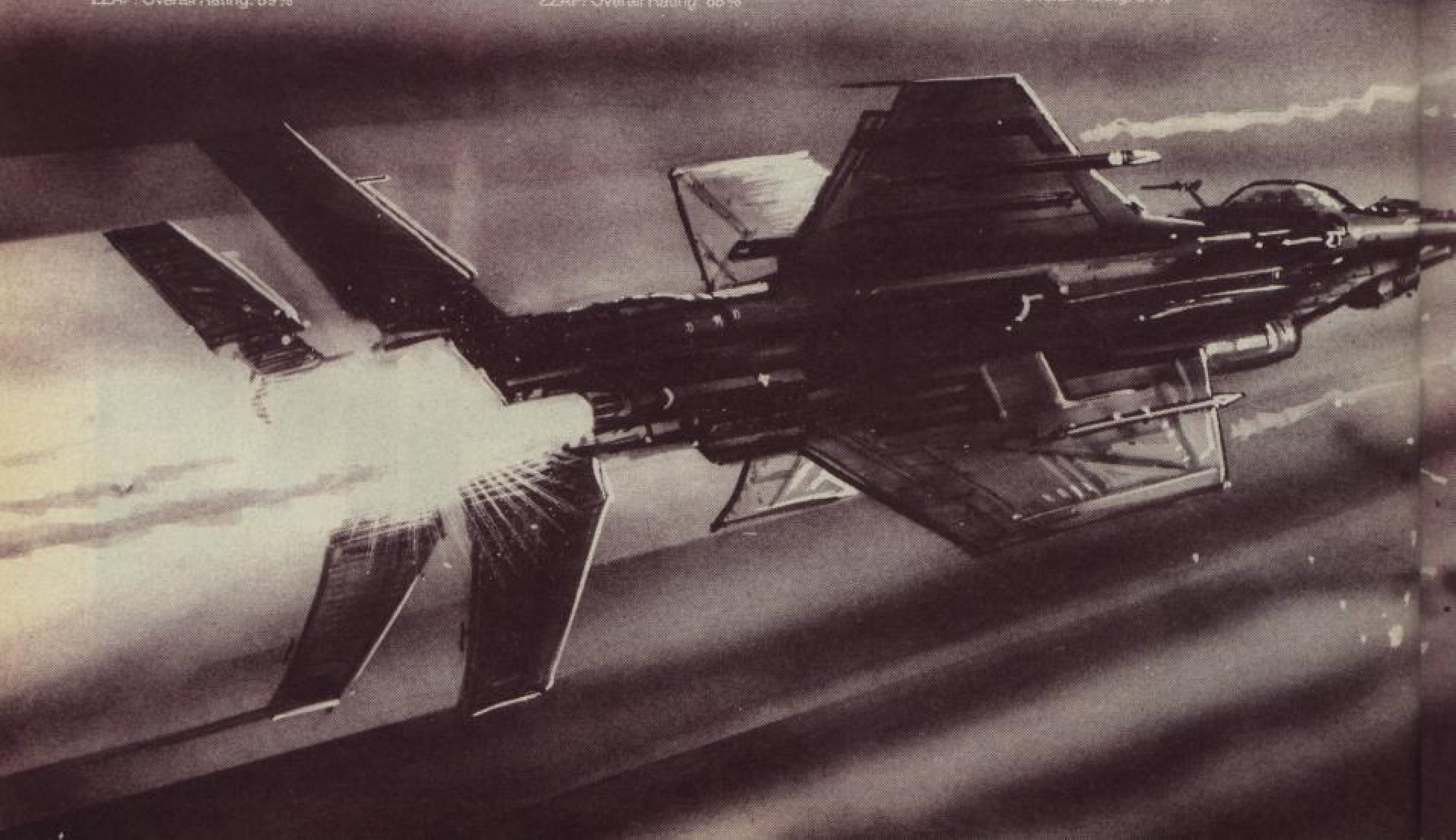
26 *(24)* **IRIDIS ALPHA**
Hewson, £8.95 cass, £12.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 95%

27 *(-)* **BOULDERDASH CONSTRUCTION**
Databyte, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 97%

28 *(-)* **TRAILBLAZER**
Gremlin Graphics, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 91%

29 *(30)* **ELITE**
Firebird, £14.95 cass, £17.95 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 95%

30 *(-)* **BEYOND THE FORBIDDEN FORES**
US Gold, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk
ZZAP! Overall Rating: 91%



CHARTS FEBRUARY 1987

MUSIC TOP 10

1 *(1)* **KNUCKLEBUSTERS**
Melbourne House
Main Theme (Rob Hubbard)

2 *(-)* **LIGHTFORCE**
FTL
Main Theme (Rob Hubbard)

3 *(2)* **MIAMI VICE**
Ocean
'Title Screen' Music (Martin Galway)

4 *(3)* **PARALLAX**
Ocean
Title Screen Music (Martin Galway)

5 *(4)* **WAR**
Martech
Title Screen Music (Rob Hubbard)

6 *(5)* **PHANTOMS OF THE ASTEROID**
Mastertronic
Title Screen Music (Rob Hubbard)

7 *(6)* **GLIDER RIDER**
Quicksilva
Main Theme (David Whittaker)

8 *(7)* **SANXION**
Thalamus
Loading Music (Rob Hubbard)

9 *(8)* **BOMBO**
Rino
Egyptian Piece (WE Music)

10 *(9)* **COMIC BAKERY**
Imagine
Title Screen Music (Martin Galway)



CHART VOTING DRAW WINNERS

WINNER (£40 worth of software plus ZZAP! T-Shirt): **Paul Bidgway**, Gwent NP6 5LA

RUNNERS UP (ZZAP! T-Shirt and Cap): **Alan Strawbridge**, Weymouth DT4 9JN, **Carlo Wiggins**, Swanage BH19 1PQ, **Derek Wick**, Stirling FK7 9DF, **Stephen Fairclough**, Liverpool L36 9TB



ZZAP! 64 CHART VOTING COUPON

(Please write in BLOCK CAPITALS)

Name ....
Address ....
....
....
Postcode ....

If I win the £40 worth of software I would like the following games:
(Game and Software House)

T-Shirt Size S/M/L

I am voting for the following five games:

1 ....
2 ....
3 ....
4 ....
5 ....

I am also voting for the following piece of music:
(Commodore 64 ONLY)

....

ZZAP! CHARTS, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB

PARK PATROL

Firebird, £1.99 cass, joystick only

● Cute and highly original arcade-style collect 'em up

Tourists are a real problem aren't they? They just can't go for a day out in the park without creating havoc, dropping rubbish everywhere and doing silly things like leaping into the river when they can't swim. Consequently a Park Patroller's life is a very busy one – you can find out just how busy by playing **Park Patrol**.

Taking the role of Head Parkie, you have look after the welfare of your beautiful park and the river which runs through it, a task which involves whizzing about the place on foot and in your powerboat. The joystick-controlled Parkie can move anywhere on the screen, and pressing the fire button makes him jump up into the air. The boat is boarded and left by jumping, a tricky task which sometimes leads to a wet ending – mis-time the jump and Parkie falls into the water, losing one of three lives. The river is filled with logs which have to be avoided – if the boat hits one the poor Parkie is catapulted out of the boat, lands in the water and drowns, once again losing a life.

Picking up rubbish dropped by the visitors is Parkie's primary task and is achieved by running or sailing over the offending items. Twelve pieces of rubbish need to be collected on each level before Parkie is allowed to progress. This job is made difficult by the marauding land-turtles (!) and river snakes which try to molest him – if they succeed Parkie loses a life. Luckily both types of creature can be disposed of: turtles are really stupid and sometimes fall into the river, allowing Parkie to run over them; and river snakes can be made to disappear by throwing snake repellent into the river.

Another problem is the swimming tourists in the river – these too have to be avoided at all costs. Occasionally swimmers get into a spot of trouble and start drowning. Parkie is immediately alerted, and must assume the role of life-guard. Another life is lost if he fails to sail to the stricken swimmer and pick him up before he drowns. If Parkie reaches him however, a large points bonus is given.

As Parkie moves around he expends calories, shown numerically on screen. If this calorie meter is allowed to reach zero a life is lost. Fortunately the lost calories can be replenished by going into the park hut. Extra lives are only awarded every 20,000 points.

When all the rubbish has been collected any calories remaining



The old cliche 'they don't make 'em like they used to' certainly applies to Park Patrol. It's nearly three years old but still compares very favourably with full priced present day software. But Park Patrol isn't full priced, it's only £1.99, and as such ranks alongside Thrust, as one of the best VFM budget releases. It makes most other software houses look rather silly, including Activision – the original authors. Why they didn't release this little gem over here themselves is a complete mystery to me. It's hardly as if their catalogue is overflowing with great games. Buy Park Patrol, you've no excuse not to.

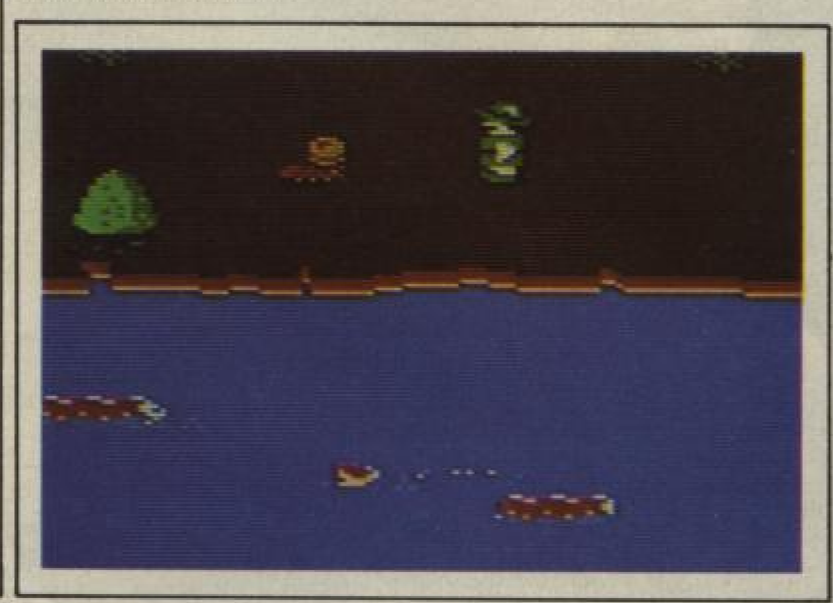


It's difficult to believe that this game is nearly three years old – it's brilliant in all respects. The graphics are fabulous – really colourful with exceptionally 'cute' sprites and great parallax scrolling backdrops. Soundwise Park Patrol is excellent too, with five boppy tunes and wonderful sound effects creating a perfect atmosphere. The gameplay is neat, requiring some nifty joystick work and precision timing if you're going to complete the rubbish collection without falling foul of the many hazards. This must rank as one of the best budget games ever. Miss it and you're missing something really special.

Girlie Parkie attempts to collect the two cans and make it back her boat without being molested by marauding land-turtles



Macho Male Parkie confronts an ant: 'An' where do you fink you're going wiv me nosh! Take it back to me 'ut, ya thievin' get – or I'll kick yer in the river . . . '





Two to three years ago, Activision were releasing some highly original and playable games, amongst them Zenji, Toy Bizarre, HERO and Pastfinder. Since then they have been steadily going downhill and the quality of their software has deteriorated somewhat. There are a few exceptions, but it's a great pity that Activision have never quite found the old magic. Park Patrol is a classic piece of Activision software, and they were foolish not to release it two years ago. Fortunately Firebird have acquired the rights to release this neat game – and at a budget price! The graphics are lovely, as are the tunes and spot effects, and combined with the simplistic but addictive gameplay a true arcade feel is generated. This is a polished and playable game worth anybody's time and money.

BUDGET

are converted into bonus points and Parkie starts a new level. As the game progresses the going gets tougher, with more nasties to contend with, swamps to avoid and marauding ants which steal food (the source of calories) from Parkie's hut.

The difficulty of the levels can be changed by using a menu system accessed from the title screen. From this you can increase



or decrease the number of creatures, swimmers and swamps, making life as difficult or easy as you see fit.

PRESENTATION 97%
Excellent. Many slick features, including a comprehensive options screen.

GRAPHICS 94%
Unusual, crisp, colourful and extremely well thought out.

SOUND 96%
Five great tunes and quality sound effects.

HOOKABILITY 95%
Instantly playable and very addictive.

LASTABILITY 90%
Plenty – if boredom sets in you can use the option screen to change the game around.

VALUE 99%
All the qualities of a full-priced game for only two quid!

OVERALL 94%
An original, attractive and extremely addictive game. Don't miss it.

HARVEY HEADBANGER

Firebird, £1.99 cass, joystick or keys

Hamish Highball and Harvey Headbanger are two of the jolliest rivals ever seen. The rotund pair of characters spend their time consuming vast quantities of potent cocktails, and once they're drunk enough they scrap – 'just for fun' (a regular Liddon and Penn really). Off to the local park

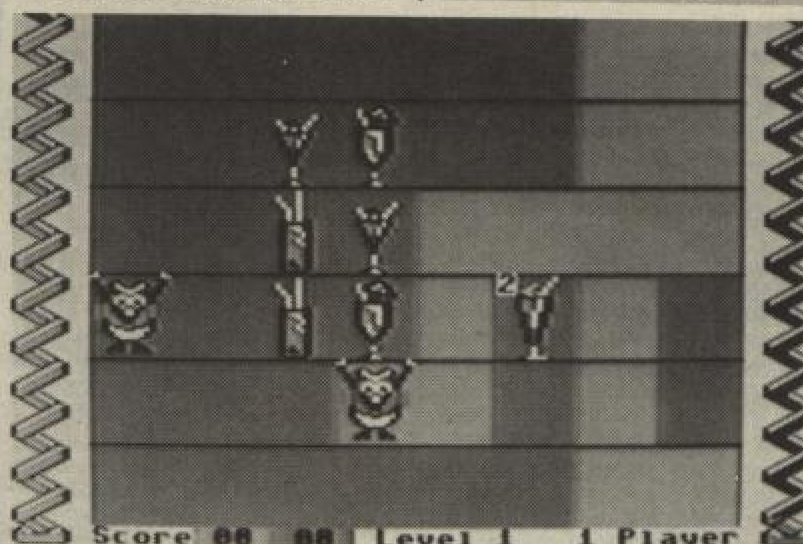


Harvey Headbanger is a great concept, but it hasn't been carried out to the fullest. The main problem is with the continual collisions, all quite amusing for a while but after that tedium sets in. The controls don't appear to be very responsive, and sometimes the characters have a life of their own. Still, this is a cute game, with a great sense of humour (especially the scenario) and is well worth trying for size.

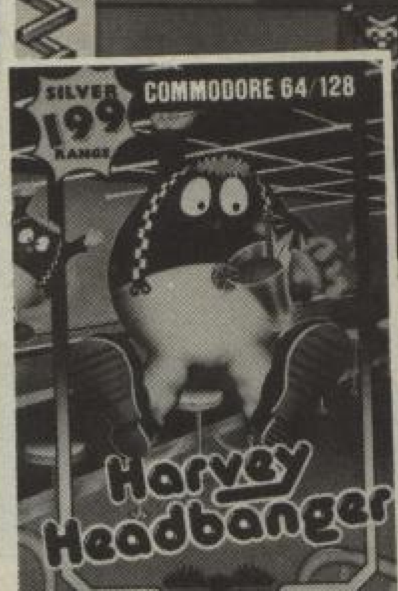
they wobble to do battle on the climbing frame, banging off walls and doors as they go. Using their oversized tummies and thickened skulls, Hamish and Harvey swing around the frame, attempting to knock each other senseless.

The climbing frame is divided up into 48 squares and only one character can occupy a square at any time. As Hamish and Harvey move around the frame network the squares change colour; Harvey turns red squares blue and Hamish turns blue squares red. To win a scrap, one of the drunkards must completely surround the other with his trail.

When a player surrounds his opponent's square, or group of squares, those ensnared turn into cocktails which are automatically drunk when collected. The recipient of these refreshing beverages becomes even more drunk, with his level of intoxication shown as a bar chart at the side of the screen. Whenever the friends bash into each other they black-out and









Harvey Headbanger is quite strange – strange in that, even though what your opponent is doing is in plain view, it's difficult to see exactly what's happening, and very easy to get caught! But that's nice. And so are the graphics, which are simple but functional. For two quid Harvey Headbanger represents a worthy purchase, but only as a two-player game – playing against the computer controlled opponent quickly becomes tedious.



This is nice, but it doesn't really work in one player mode. The two player game is a lot more entertaining and provides plenty of laughs. Graphically and aurally this isn't outstanding, but it's all quite bright, bold and jolly. Harvey Headbanger is priced right at two quid, especially when you consider its rather limited lasting appeal. Check it out and see if it's for you.

move around in a daze. The alcohol has a numbing effect, so the more intoxicated player is less affected by a collision and recovers faster.

The twosome battle it out until one of them has been trapped ten times and the other is declared the winner.

PRESENTATION 88%
Plenty of options, a demo mode, and adequate in-game instructions.

GRAPHICS 51%
Nothing special, but quite apt for the game.

SOUND 67%
A jolly tune and some suitable spot FX accompany the proceedings.

HOOKABILITY 85%
Initially highly entertaining.

LASTABILITY 71%
But the fun wanes without a second player.

VALUE 81%
Sensibly priced for what's on offer.

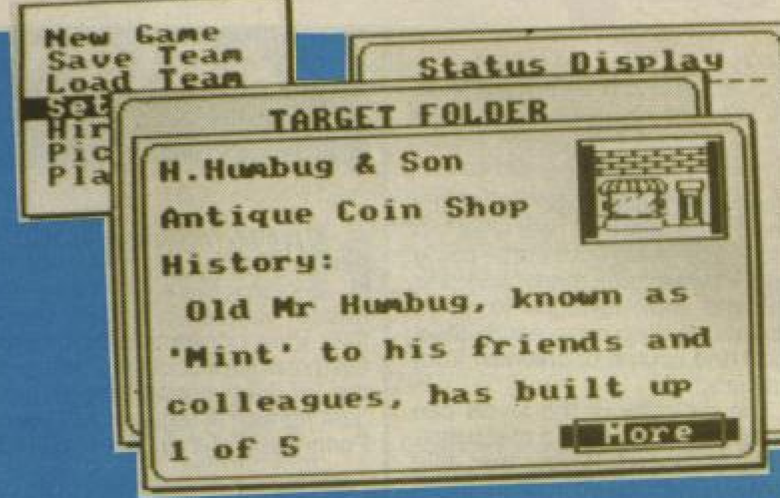
OVERALL 73%
An unusual and highly playable two player game.

ZZAP! TEST

THEY STOLE A MILLION

39 Steps, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick only

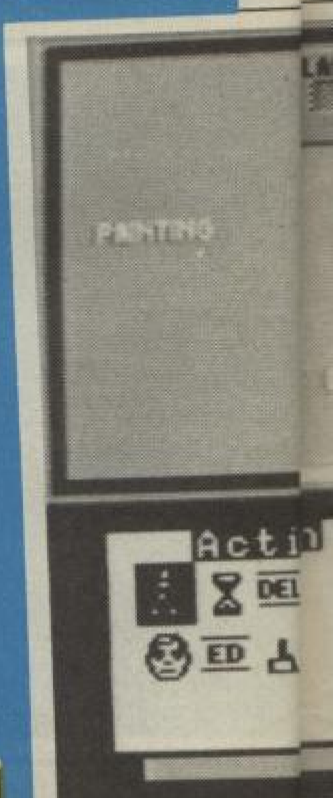
● An innovative and addictive icon-driven simulation of burglary – without the risk!

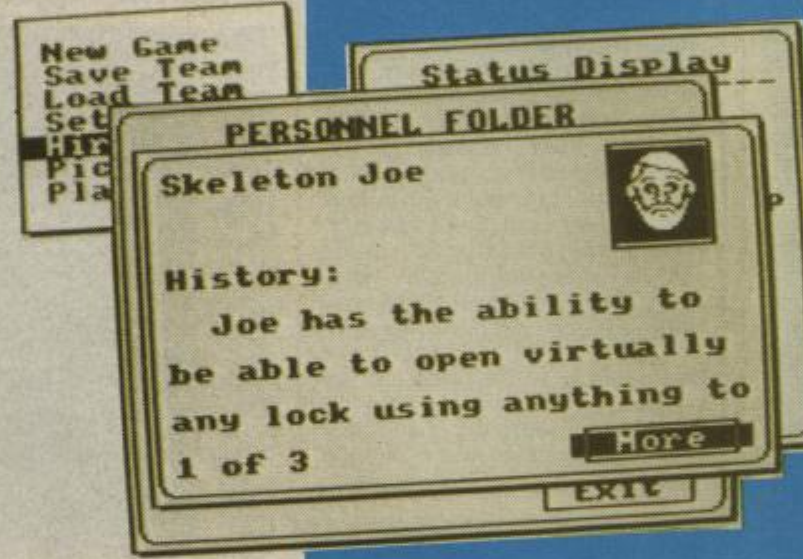


Selecting the target

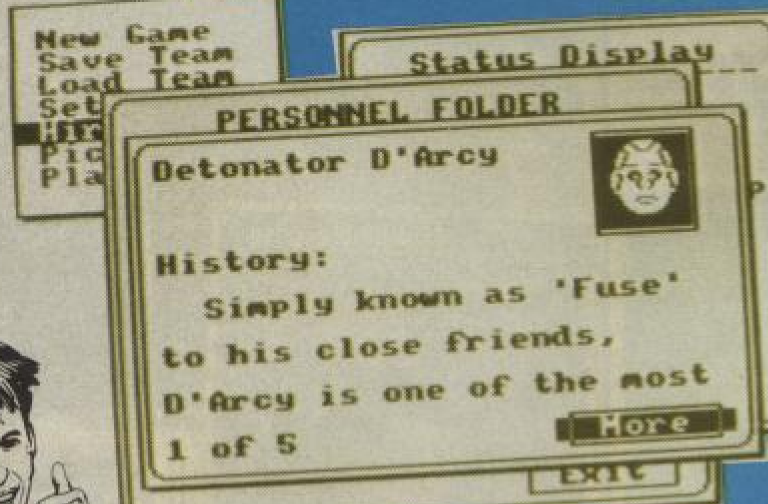
The Boss: a small time crook with big ideas. He's had enough of the petty larceny lark and has decided to get into the big time. However it can't be done alone – so where can he find help? The answer came whilst flicking through a copy of 'What Crime' magazine. Some bright spark has compiled a massive database system called SWAG (SoftWare for Aspiring Gangsters) containing information on potential targets, available hoodlums and possible fences. Intrigued by this, The Boss sent for details. And before he knew it, he was sitting in front of his own computer with £55,000 to spend on the necessities for his first big job.

The database is icon-driven and uses a window system to display information. To start with, seven main options are given: New Game; Load Team; Save Team; Set Target; Hire Team; Pick Fence and Plan Raid. Selecting the Set Target option calls up a list of five possible targets: Coin Dealer; Art Gallery; Diamond Merchant; High Street Bank and the Narburak Museum. Once a target is chosen, some basic information on its location is given, along with the option to buy blueprints. The price of blueprints increases with the importance of the location. Information on the value of the swag within must be obtained – at a price – along with details of security and alarm systems. Otherwise, when it comes to planning a





Choosing a reliable team

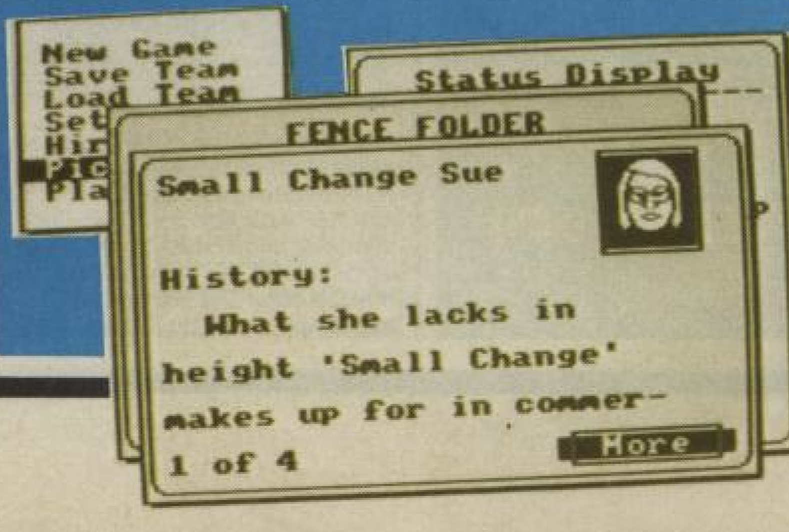


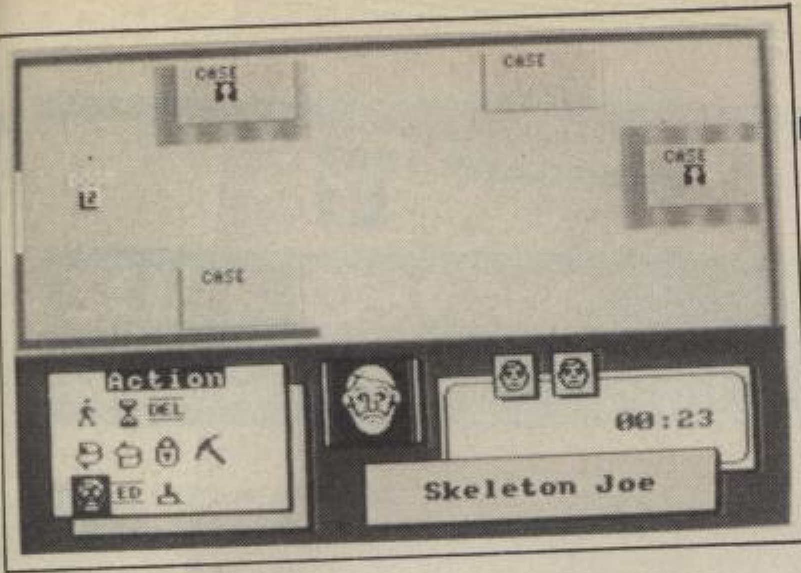
And of course, you need a fence . . .





Initially, this looks and sounds a bit bland. But once you get into it you realise there's a great game beneath the seedy exterior. They Stole a Million is more of a puzzle game than anything else – you've got to decide exactly who and what is required for the job and then work out the best way to pull it off. Although the action isn't frenetic it's certainly nail-biting stuff, especially when you're just about to disappear with the loot and you hear a police siren approaching. Definitely one for those who like to plan ahead rather than blast things straight away.

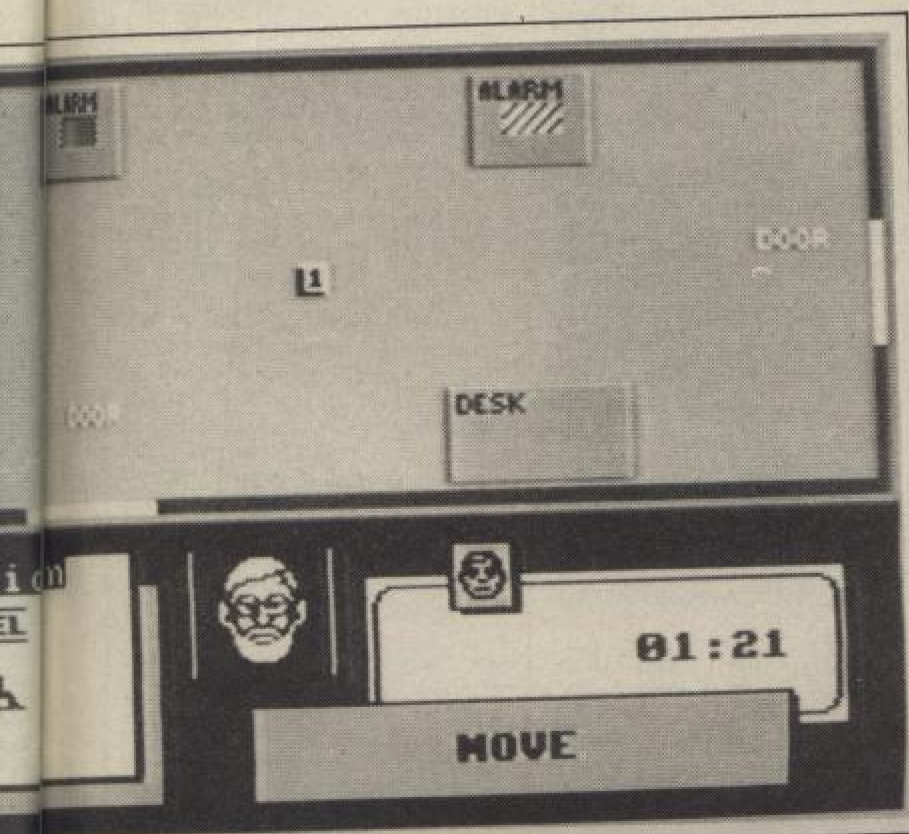




The planning stage. Skeleton Joe is confronted by a locked door. Fortunately he's a highly talented locksmith, so picking the lock shouldn't prove too much of a problem

They Stole A Million is a game with more than its fair share of strategy. A vast amount of planning is needed with timing being all important. The security systems become rather complex on later jobs, incorporating things such as infra-red beams and cameras that are activated in sequence. Thrilling stuff. Although the graphics are sparse and the spot FX are minimal, I didn't really notice as I became totally engrossed with the actual playing of the game. It's very satisfying, once the planning is complete, to lie back and watch your motley crew come away with a cool million. Frustrating at times, but surprisingly enjoyable to play.





Inside the Art Gallery. Bill Wires Smith must deactivate the alarm systems

raid the locations of loot, alarms and so on are not shown on the blueprints.

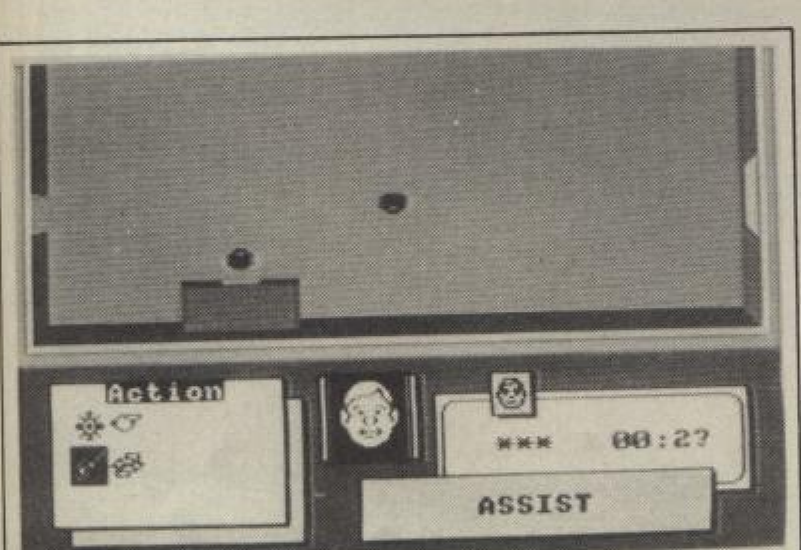
Using the information available, a team must be chosen with the necessary skills to pull off the job – of course, a fence is required to discretely 'dispose' of the loot. There are eighteen villains for hire, each with a specific skill and a secondary skill, ranging from safe cracking to lookout. Information on the available team members can be examined before making a choice. Five fences are available, each dealing in two specific areas, for example works of art and gold.

After the Plan Raid stage has loaded, the screen display changes to show an area of the blueprint of the target selected. Beneath this is a set of control icons and display windows used to instruct the team members. It is up to The Boss to mastermind a time-effective route for his hoodlums to follow during the robbery. Members are controlled individually and can be instructed where to go and what to do. Co-ordination is the key and the robbery must be carefully planned so that the villains don't get in each other's way. A clock displays the current time for each member and updates with successive instructions.

When the robbery is underway the 'Assist' icon can be used to view the progress of the team and help them if required. Occasionally a police patrol passes by and the actions of each member must be temporarily frozen so as not to attract attention. Should the proceedings get a little too sticky, the team can be instructed to leg it. Or if nothing is going to plan, the job can be aborted.

If the job is successful, the loot is divided amongst the team and The Boss can go on to plan another, more daring and possibly more productive raid.

Now who said crime doesn't pay . . .



Confronted by a guard in the Diamond Merchants



Ignore the crap title – They Stole A Million is one of most original, atmospheric and compulsive games ever to appear on the 64. I found it incredibly absorbing and highly compelling to play. A great deal of aforethought has to go into planning a job, and timing is crucial. Although graphically and aurally sparse, watching a job being executed is packed with nail-biting tension – and highly rewarding when it's pulled off! For once Ariolasoft have come up with something really special. They Stole A Million is a welcome alternative to the current trend of (yawn) officially licenced tie-ins and conversions, and is definitely worthy of consideration.

PRESENTATION 94%
Sufficient documentation and an impressive, easy to use icon-driven window system.

GRAPHICS 42%
Lacklustre, but not essential.

SOUND 29%
Abysmal rendition of 'The Sweeney' tune and a few simple spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 89%
Deceptively easy to get into, and compulsive from the first job.

LASTABILITY 92%
Five increasingly difficult jobs to crack.

VALUE 87%
Ten quid isn't asking too much for the opportunity to burgle without the risk.

OVERALL 90%
An original and absorbing alternative to gratuitous binary violence.

SURF CHAMP

New Concepts, £11.95 cass, keyboard with surfboard overlay (supplied)

Surf City, here we come . . . with New Concept's *Surf Champ* surfing simulation. Apart from a cassette, the package contains a plastic surfboard which fits over the keyboard of the 64, pivoting on a little fulcrum fitted over the G key.

The simulation itself requires some knowledge of surfing terminology, and a tutorial program is included on the B side of the cassette. Loading the tutorial allows you to step through menus which lead to descriptions of the various moves that score points, as well as information on the selection of gear, a glossary of surfing slang, a history of surfing and tips for safe fun in the surf.

Before starting play proper, the program gives some information on the climatic conditions prevailing. It then leads you through a set of options, requesting information on your age, sex, height and weight before allowing you to select the type of board and clothing you wish to take to the water. The conditions change every time, and as in real life the best surfing is only to be had when the sea is good . . .

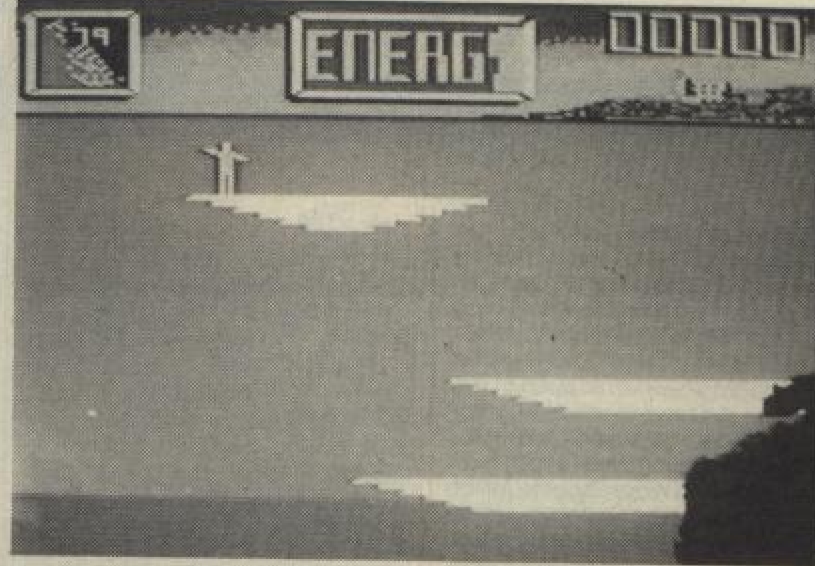
The final menu option allows you to specify whether you want to practise riding the waves or enter a competition. In practice mode you can select from ten speeds and surf away merrily, without running out of energy while you practise manoeuvres. In competition mode, competition rules apply and you get ten rides in which to build up a score – as in real life, your performance deteriorates as you tire.

The sport begins with your surfer on the beach, carrying a board. Pick a spot to enter the water, press down on the nose of the surfboard on your computer to leave the beach and paddle out to sea. A large energy bar in the sky gradually disappears as your energy is used up – paddling the board gets tiring very quickly. Once a suitable spot has been reached, the next step is to turn round and wait for a wave. Pressing the space bar puts your surfer onto the board, and catching a wave allows the real fun to begin.

Once a wave has been caught and the surfboard mounted, the display changes to give a view of the wave you are riding with your surfer zooming along on the water. Using the surfboard overlay, it's up to you to attempt point-scoring moves as you ride the wave towards the beach. The board pivots about its centre and makes contact with some of the Commodore's keys. As the little surfboard is tilted and slanted during play, the key-presses produced are translated to movement on screen. The aim is to go for the highest score possible by assembling a routine of slick stunts. Your performance is governed by the type of wave you are riding, the choice of equipment and physique entered at the start, the weather, and the energy remaining – a tired surfer makes mistakes!



I've never mounted a surfboard in my life, but if this simulation of surfing is anything to go by I'm glad I never bothered. Surf Champ **just isn't realistic enough to be classed as a simulation of surfing. The only innovative thing about this package is the surfboard – and even this hasn't been used to good effect. New Concepts should have produced some form of 3D surfing simulation instead of this tedious two dimensional game. I don't think** Surf Champ **will appeal to anybody vaguely interested in the sport, and it certainly won't convert anyone. Give it a miss.**

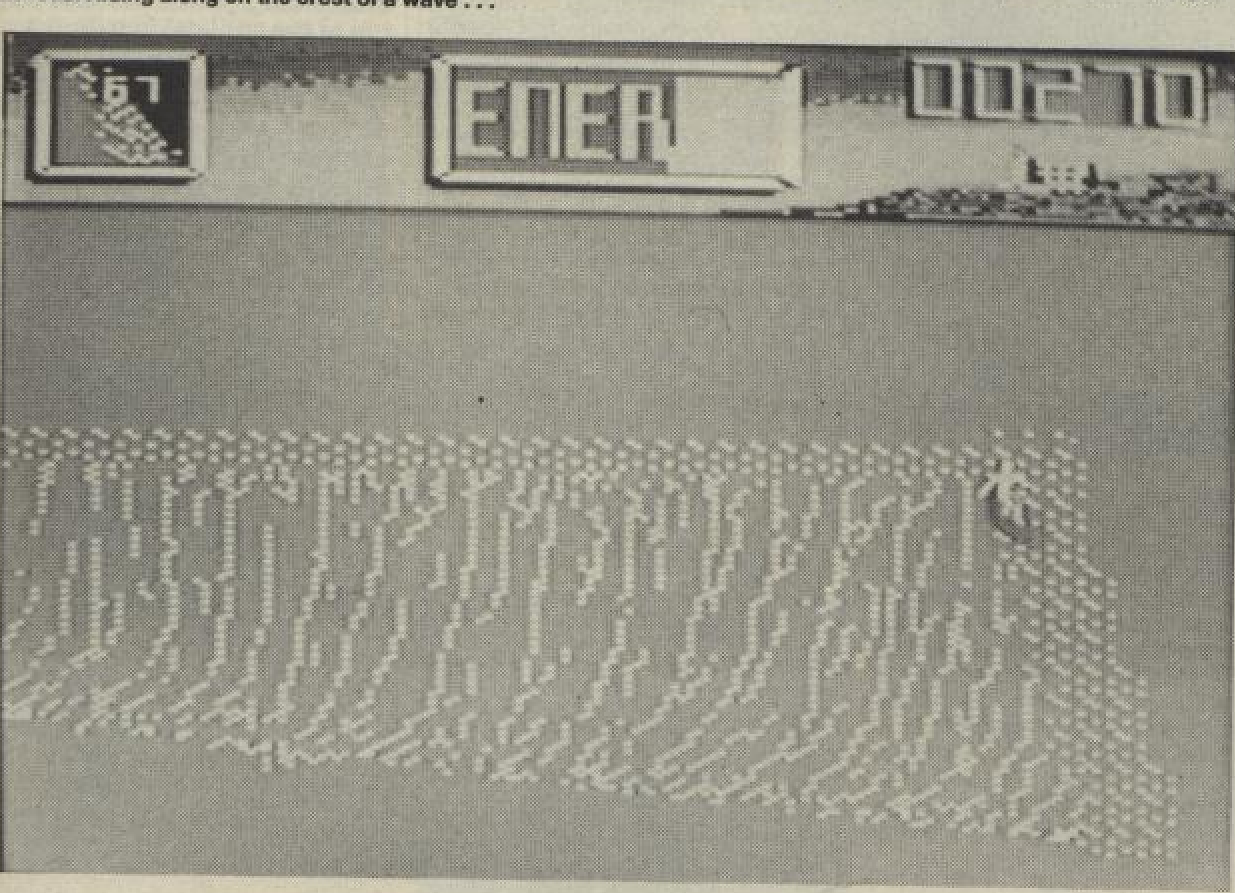


No, the surfer isn't walking on water – he's paddled out to sea and is about to mount the surfboard



This isn't much fun – it's very nicely presented and even has a plastic surfboard to plonk over the keys, but the actual program is pretty dull. The graphics are very poor – if you paddle your man far enough out to sea he can be made to swim over the buildings on the horizon. The worst bit is when he stands on the board – he looks like a matchstick man. Even the sound is very poor. If you're dead keen on surfing you may like to give it a look, but I think you'll be disappointed.

Et voila! Riding along on the crest of a wave . . .



PRESENTATION 85%
Informative instructions, detailed in-game presentation, and a cute surfboard.

GRAPHICS 23%
Lacklustre representations of the sea and surfer.

SOUND 6%
Sparse.

HOOKABILITY 39%
May prove mildly interesting to those unfamiliar with this unusual sport.

LASTABILITY 29%
Far too unrealistic and tedious to be absorbing.

VALUE 21%
Expensive – for a plastic surfboard and a poor piece of software.

OVERALL 30%
An original but uninspiring simulation.

SCOOBY DOO

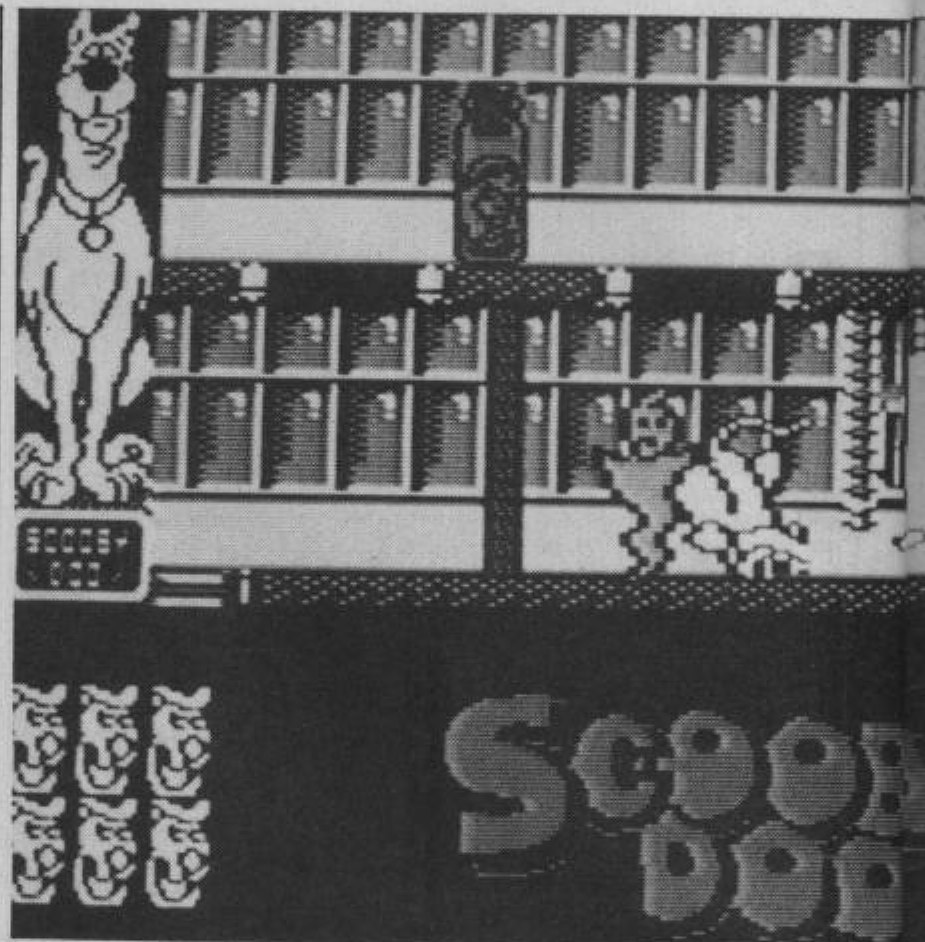
Elite, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys

Shaggy, Velma, Daphne, Fred and Scooby were driving along in the beaten up Mystery Mobile when a strange rattling beneath the bonnet forced them to pull over. On examining the engine they found the cause of the rattling – a secret stash of Scooby Snacks had blocked the distributor. The gang were a mite miffed by this and were about to inflict untold damage on Scooby – when Daphne noticed an ominous looking castle on the hill and suggested they ask the occupant for help. So, leaving Scooby to guard the van, the foursome departed.

But little did they know that the castle on the hill was owned by a mad professor who chops people up into little pieces and stores them in specimen jars for future experiments. And surprise, surprise that's exactly what happened to Shaggy, Velma, Daphne and Fred.



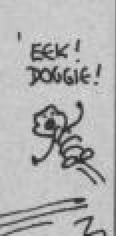
It's funny how a Hannah-Barbera kiddies cartoon can suddenly become a Kung-Fu Master style beat 'em up. But it has and it's not very good. If you took out the Scooby Doo sprite and put in something else nobody would look twice at it. There are only four limited levels and once you've completed them the game starts all over again, without so much as a congratulatory screen – and it doesn't get any harder. If you've been looking forward to Scooby Doo and feel tempted to rush out and buy it, don't bother, it's not worth the effort.



Level Three. Scooby cowers, and his trapped chum looks on in disgust from the top of the screen



Level Two. Scooby stands proud, ready to knock the living daylights out of the approaching Jack-in-the-pot



Scooby was hungry, so he decided to pop out for a bite to eat. He got lost and ended up inside the castle, where he found a Scooby Snack. It didn't take him long to realise that this meant his 'friends' were in trouble and needed rescuing. Fast.

There are four levels to the castle and at the top of each is a member of the gang trapped inside a specimen jar. Scooby has run around the castle in an attempt to locate his chums and release them. As he moves, the screen scrolls with him.

Unfortunately each level is inhabited by strange creatures determined to stop Scooby from releasing his friends. The only way Scooby can defend himself against these creatures is by hitting them. But he can only hit them if he's not moving. And if they get him, he faints with fear and loses one of six lives. When all his lives are lost Scooby joins his friends as a future experiment for the professor. Fortunately Scooby can gain extra lives by picking up Scooby Snacks, which are scattered around the castle.

On the first floor of the castle Scooby encounters ghastly ghosts which jump out from behind closed doors. Hooded figures sneak up on him and try to knock him off his paws. The second level is full of deadly springy things which bounce out of dumb waiters. Skulls litter the floor and must be jumped over, and floors are separated by ladders which



The main problem with Scooby Doo is that it hasn't inherited any of the humour from the cartoon series. All that's happened is that they've taken the characters, turned them into blocky sprites and made a tiresome bash 'em up game out of it. The creatures come at you too fast in relation to the speed at which you can turn to hit them, and this often resulted in a dead Scooby and a frustrated Richard Eddy! It's sad that Elite have spoilt such a great character by releasing a game as poor as this.



I find it hard to believe that it has taken Elite over a year to produce a game of this quality. In eighteen months or so, Scooby Doo has changed from a potentially exciting home computer equivalent of a laser disk arcade adventure into a run of the mill beat 'em up. It's quite playable, but far from impressive and I think it's a cheek to charge so much for so little – especially when you consider that when Scooby Doo was first advertised it cost £7.95!

Level Four. Once again, Scooby stands proud. This brave pooch will show the bulbous monk a thing or two







must be climbed.

Level three hosts more wicked looking monsters. Ghoulfish float around exercising their huge elastic jaws. Ghosts from the first level make a re-appearance, and bats screech around at head height causing Scooby to bend down and cover his eyes in fright! The fourth and final level is guarded by monks with no faces, along with flying dumbells and rolling bowling balls. If Scooby manages to negotiate these hazards and rescue his chums then, just like a bad dream, he has to start all over again . . .

PRESENTATION 81%
Attractive title screen, practice option and high-score table.

GRAPHICS 53%
Chunky characters, simple animation and backdrops, and bland colour schemes.

SOUND 51%
Uninspiring rendition of the Scooby Doo theme tune, and a few simple spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 61%
Easy to get into but not overly addictive.

LASTABILITY 40%
Playable but monotonous with it.

VALUE 32%
An expensive piece of budget quality software.

OVERALL 42%
A below average arcade game which fails to capture the flavour of the cartoon character.

TERRA CRESTA

Imagine, £8.95 cass, joystick only

Terra Cresta is the follow up to the arcade game *Moon Cresta*. In the sequel, the action continues over a vertically scrolling landscape, dotted with deadly alien ground installations which shoot at the fighter under your control. Alien craft zoom in from the top and sides of the screen firing missiles and attempting to crash into your ship. Ground-based targets include missile-spitting dinosaurs, spinning radar stations and carbuncular lumps which spew forth missiles. Five numbered targets on the terrain provide a bolt-on module and extra fire power when destroyed. Taking out the last numbered target confers temporary invincibility.

After collecting additional firepower the ship can go into 'formation mode' – by pressing the space bar the Terra Cresta splits up into modules and shoots an arc of laser fire instead of single, narrow pulses. This mode of operation is temporary, and can only be used three times for each extra piece added to the ship.

A large robot concludes a circuit through the landscape. Repeated hits destroy the first two robots encountered, but third time around you confront a mechanoid that can only be disposed of by a fully armed Terra Cresta fighter, equipped with all five pieces of extra weaponry acquired en route.



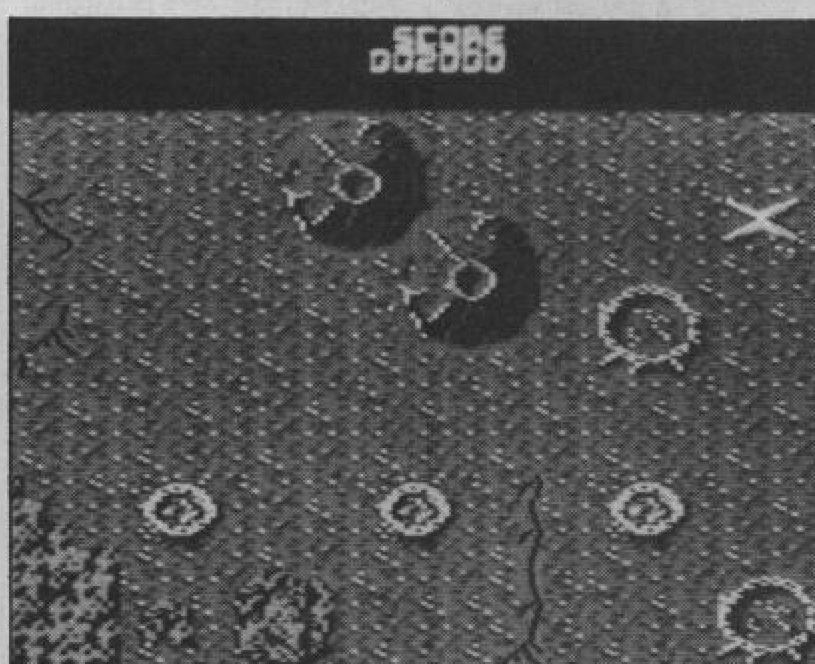
I like a decent shoot 'em up but I'm not too keen on Terra Cresta **– it's so frustrating. It's fast, furious and unfair. If you blast an alien at the top of the screen it doesn't die, but it can sure as hell blow you away. Worse still, when you die you are put right back at the start – very annoying. The graphics are well defined and everything moves very smoothly, but the noise made when your craft fires sounds like someone with whooping cough! If you are willing persevere there's fun to be had from this game.**

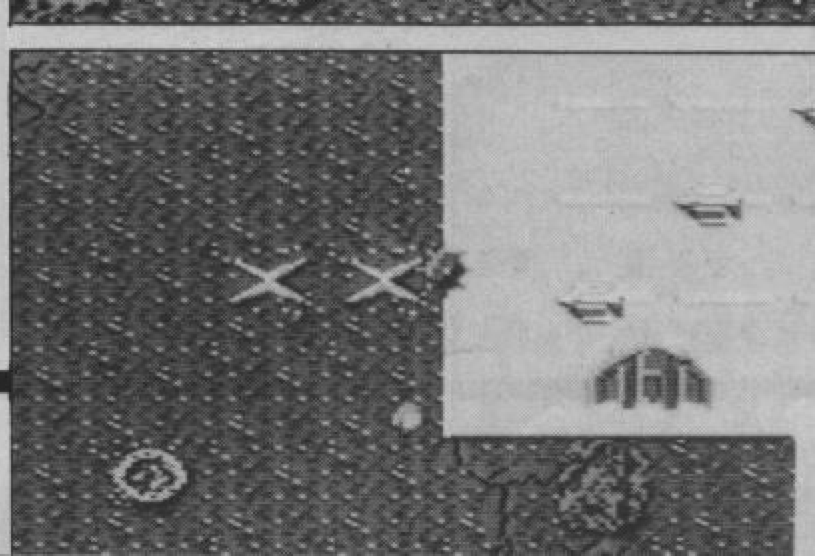


Terra Cresta **isn't a particularly bad game, but it doesn't hold interest for more than a couple of hours. It's very much a pattern game and the landscape is quite short – it doesn't take long before you reach the fat robot and it seems to start all over again. Consequently you can get to know the game inside-out after a few goes and it all gets very predictable. The background graphics are very unclear and lack crispness – the same goes for the sprites. The sound effects aren't wonderful, but the title screen and high-score tunes aren't bad at all. Not the best vertically scrolling shoot 'em up available, but it's certainly not the worst.**



Vertically scrolling shoot 'em ups seem to be the 'in' thing at the moment, what with five games of a similar theme being released within the space of a few weeks! Terra Cresta **isn't the worst of the bunch – it's marginally superior to** 1942**, and a lot better than** 1943 **or** Xevious**. But it's still nothing special. The graphics are reasonable – adequately drawn but unimaginatively coloured (no doubt in keeping with the arcade original). The title screen music is rather good, but a monotonous and highly irritating tune plays during the game. The most annoying thing about** Terra Cresta **though, is having to restart at the beginning of a landscape when you die. This is most infuriating, especially when you get quite far. I wouldn't bother rushing out to buy** Terra Cresta **– you're not missing much.**





PRESENTATION 66%
Simple in-game presentation, sufficient instructions, and a high-score table.

GRAPHICS 59%
Simple sprites and backdrops. Garish colour schemes.

SOUND 79%
Good title screen tune, irritating in-game soundtrack and spot FX though.

HOOKABILITY 68%
Straightforward shoot 'em up action, but rather frustrating and not particularly compulsive.

LASTABILITY 49%
The fun is short-lived – but good while it lasts.

VALUE 53%
Cheaper and better than most shoot 'em ups of this type.

OVERALL 56%
A mediocre addition to the growing range of vertically scrolling shoot 'em ups.

ZZAP! TEST

BREAKTHRU

US Gold, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick

If the words PK430 are mentioned to you what do you think of? An element? Nope, slap on the wrist. A type of missile? No, think again. Your country's latest fighter plane, which just happens to have been stolen by an enemy force who are going to use it to start World War III? Yup! Congratulations, you're now qualified to go on a solo mission into enemy territory and rescue it.

Luckily the government don't expect you to go in on foot like one



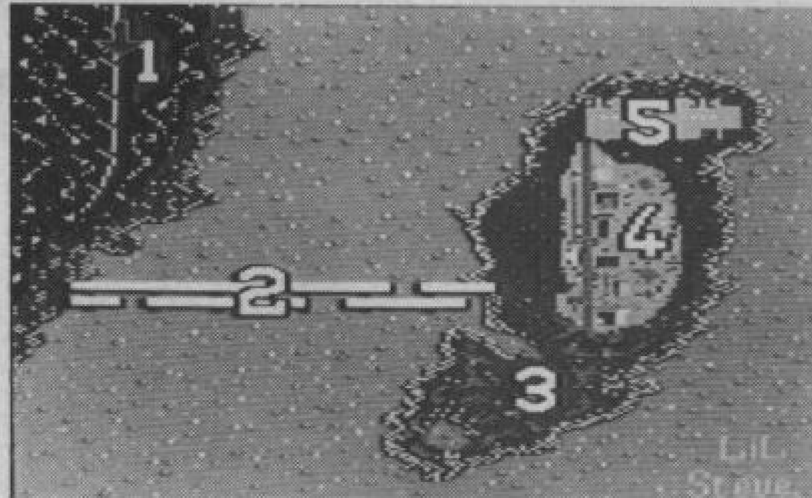
Conversions come and conversions go, but this has got to be one of the worst that I've ever seen. Why bother spending a fortune on an official licence when you're going to turn out a heap of rubbish like this? The graphics and sprites are awful, with totally unsympathetic use of colour and no real attention to detail. As for the actual game . . . BLEUGH!!! The enemy vehicles float about the place like flies, they even impersonate a well known religious figure by walking on water!? The bridges are the best laugh – your missiles hit them, then fly over while you travel underneath. There are an amazing number of annoying faults that you wouldn't even expect in a budget game, let alone one which sports a tenner price tag. Don't insult your Commodore by even considering buying it.



The original arcade game isn't anything special, but it's fun to play. This conversion isn't anything special either, but unfortunately it's not much fun to play. It would make a reasonable budget release but for ten quid it represents poor value. Conversion comparisons aside . . . well, Breakthru **is still dire. Apart from the superb (Fred Gray?) tune on the 'title screen' there is a distinct lack of decent sound and graphics: the backdrops are simple and repetitive, the sprites are even worse, and colour has been used most unimaginatively. The overall look of** Breakthru **is shoddy and unfinished. Perhaps it is? If this was the only game in the world and I was the only boy . . . I'd top myself.**

of the Super Joe – 'Bazooka Hat' – Rambo sisters. Instead they have given you the world's most sophisticated armoured vehicle to help you complete the mission. This vehicle of death and destruction has to be driven through enemy territory to where the plane is being held. Naturally the enemy are loathe to let you just wander into their sacred fatherland and waltz off with their newly stolen plane, after all it's the greatest invention since the Wright brothers historic monoplane, so you can expect some stiff opposition.

The journey to the captured plane involves negotiating five different types of enemy terrain; mountains, a bridge, a prairie, a city and finally the enemy airfield, all of which scroll from right to left as the armoured car trundles along. The car can be made to move anywhere on screen (landscape allowing) by logical tugs on the joystick, but it explodes if it clanks off the road, resulting in a loss of one of the three reserve cars. What makes this vehicle so special is its jumping ability (that's where the sophisticated label comes in – forget super duper lasers, this car leaps its little engine out), this is useful for negotiating rockfalls, broken bridges and other hazards which infest the crumbly enemy highway.



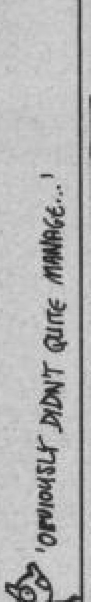


There are rush jobs and there are coin-op conversions, both one and the same on the majority of occasions. What we have here is a game that has nothing at all going for it – except that it will make money. I just can't believe the lack of professionalism in Breakthru **– shoddy, ill defined graphics and dire gameplay make the whole thing unworthy of any amount of money. Avoid it and be happy.**

As the vehicle wends its way across the treacherous landscape it is ambushed by enemy lorries, cars, tanks, flamethrowers, the kitchen sink, the enemy's granny and whatever else the villains care to put up against it. If any of these are crashed into, or if they hit you with their missiles or flames, then another reserve car is lost. There are other static hazards too, including land mines and gun emplacements. Luckily the car is armed with missiles which can destroy anything that seems even slightly dangerous.

Deeper into enemy territory, more and more hazards appear in order to hinder the super-car. The bridge section entails leaping over great chasms, the prairie requires a huge leap over a lake and by the time you reach the airfield everything the enemy can muster is thrown into the battlefield. Never mind, saving the world is never an easy task, but think of the job satisfaction!





PRESENTATION 54%
No title screen or options and adequate packaging featuring misleading screen shots from the arcade original.

GRAPHICS 25%
Unimaginative sprites, backdrops and use of colour.

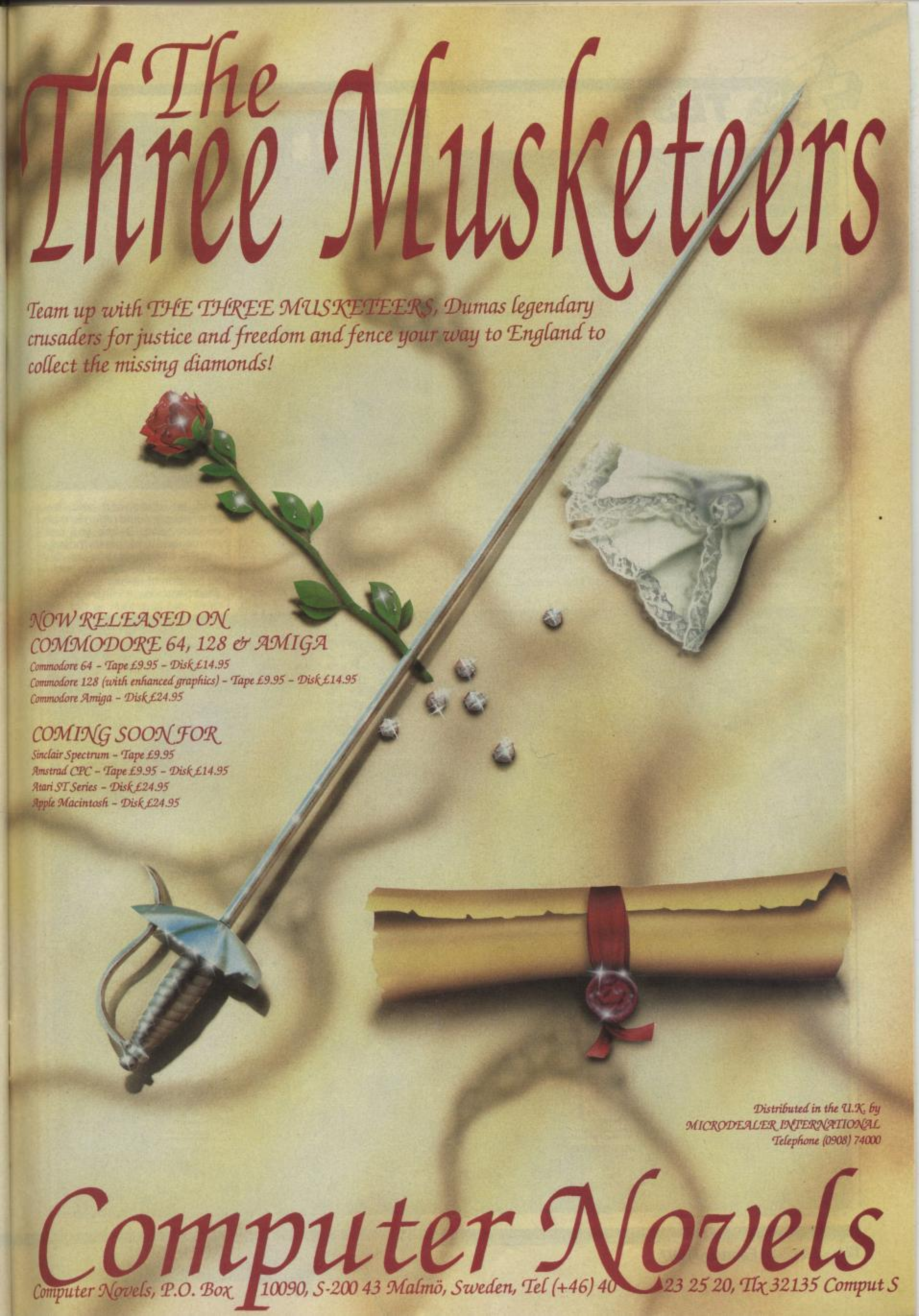
SOUND 83%
A great tune and a few simple spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 45%
The basic gameplay is easy to master, but doesn't give much satisfaction.

LASTABILITY 26%
Even the most ardent of arcade *Breakthru* fans will turn down the offer of another go.

VALUE 12%
Expensive – even at a budget price.

OVERALL 19%
A complete waste of time and money.


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ZZAP! TEST

HEARTLAND

Odin, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys



Nobody can remember exactly why or when it happened, but the people of the Nether World were transported from their own dimension into the pages of The Book, homeland of the evil demon Midas and his motley bunch of followers. This enraged Midas no end and a long and bitter battle began between the intruding civilisation and Midas' horrible army.

Events became even more confused when The Book was sent into our dimension for safe keeping (at least until Midas is defeated). The battle continued to rage and The Book was passed down from generation to generation until it came into your hands. Being of an inquisitive nature you decided to read it, but as your eyes scanned the ancient script, your eyelids became heavy and eventually closed as sleep took control of your body.

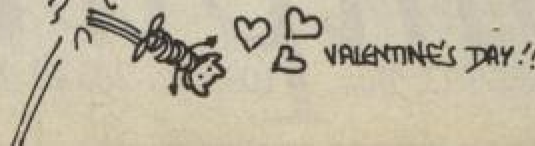
This sleep brought dreams, strange dreams where a lady dressed in white came to you and begged you for help in rescuing her people, trapped in the realms of The Book. She informs you that the last six pages of The Book, the final chapter, have been torn out and spread throughout the lands of the evil demon Midas. To make matters worse, they've been mixed with six dark pages created by Midas' forces of evil. If the good pages were collected and reassembled, and the dark ones destroyed, the power of Midas would be diminished and the Nether people could return to their own dimension. Before you can even respond to her pleas, the lady in white transports you to the dimension of The Book to begin your mission of mercy.

Heartland is a flick screen



Odin have not yet come up with a product that hasn't won my approval and Heartland **is yet another in a long line of successful releases.** Heartland **is immense fun, it didn't matter if I didn't get anywhere – the game is just such good fun to play. All the characters are so neat, superbly detailed they appear like cartoon figures. Packed with atmosphere and humour Odin have got yet another hot product on their hands which shouldn't be missed.**





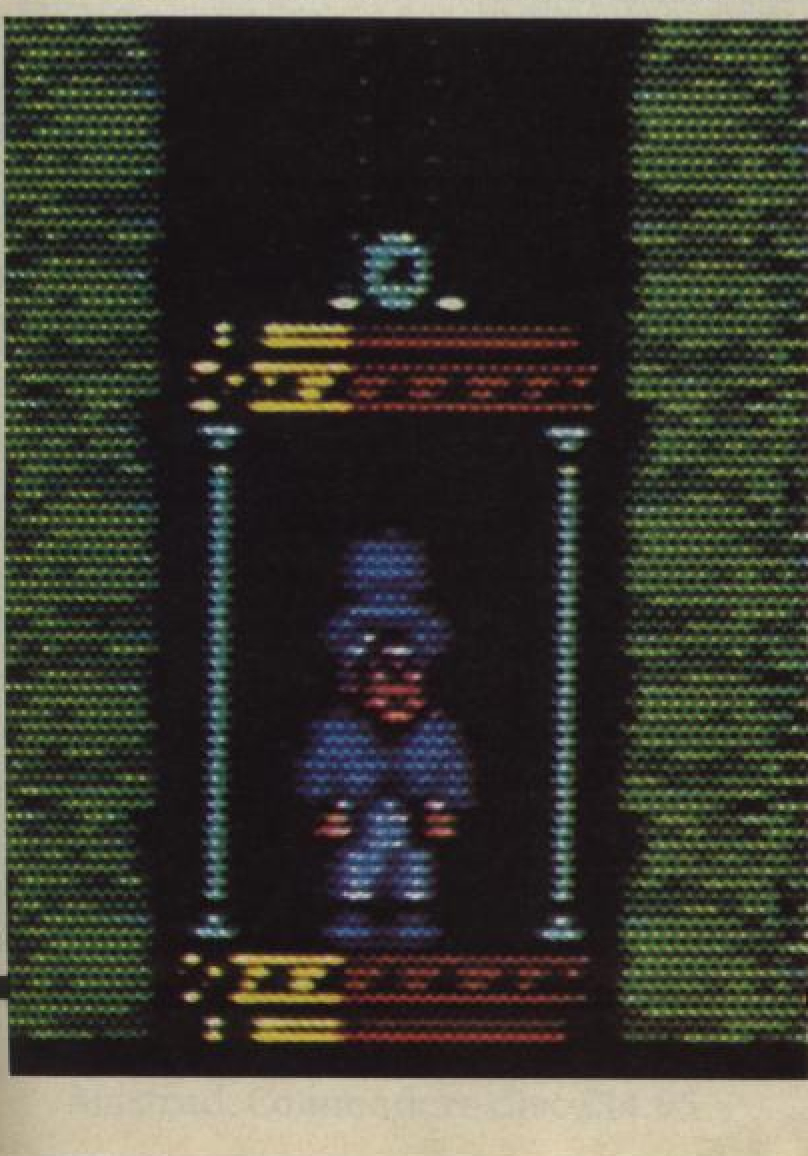


This is without doubt one of the prettiest arcade adventures I've seen on the 64: the backdrops are colourful, varied and superbly drawn, and the sprites are beautifully animated, especially the main character who for some strange reason never lets go of his hat (the land is full of hat thieves I guess). Not only is Heartland **extremely attractive, it's very playable with lots of locations to map and plenty of long term challenge.** Heartland **is quite simply Odin's best release to date and will certainly appeal to anyone who enjoys a decent arcade adventure.**



arcade adventure, where you must travel through the six realms of Midas and collect the six scattered pages. The journey through the realm is very hazardous and there are holes which must be avoided – fall into one and that's it. Out of luck. The main character can move either left or right and can jump great heights, as long as he's facing in one of those directions. Doorways and lifts can be used by going 'in' and 'out' of the screen, these take you through the various rooms of each of the six realms. Travelling from realm to realm is simple, just find a bed and fly 'Bedknobs and Broomsticks' style to your destination.

When the quest is undertaken, it's wise to collect a weapon or two to help you combat the many nasties which inhabit the Heartlands. These weapons float about the air and can be picked up by jumping into them, when this is done the collected weapon appears in the status area at the top of the screen. There are three types of weapon, a top hat, a knife and a power ball.





Arcade adventures are very numerous on the Commodore, but really good ones are very few and far between. This is one of those rarities – a graphically neat game which is very playable and has a convincing plot where you feel you're actually trying to achieve something. The graphics are really well thought out with great use of colour on the backdrops, and well animated and detailed sprites. The game itself is quite a difficult one, but not so hard that it's frustrating to play. If you want an arcade adventure to keep you puzzled then take a look at this one.

Throughout the quest the meanies of Midas try their level best to sap your life-giving energy, displayed in the form of Midas' grinning face growing in the status area. Death occurs when his ugly features are complete. The screen is not only filled with marauding baddies, there are also spells (some good and some bad) which float around the atmosphere. Picking up a good one grants the hero invincibility for a short while, and might even build up his strength a bit. However, collecting a bad spell results in the loss of more energy.

As the quest progresses, the passage of time is recorded and displayed by two hourglasses which turn as time ticks by. Every time you travel from one realm to the other the timer resets, but if a second more than eight minutes is spent in the same realm the game ends. If you manage to find a piece of The Book (the pages fly about like the spells), it can be collected by jumping in the air and catching it. Bad pages have similar properties, but you must destroy them by shooting them with your available weapon. When all six pages are collected the Nether people are freed and return to their own dimension . . . oh happy days.

PRESENTATION 84%
Pleasant title screen and a few useful options.

GRAPHICS 95%
Very pretty backdrops and sprites, and sympathetic use of colour.

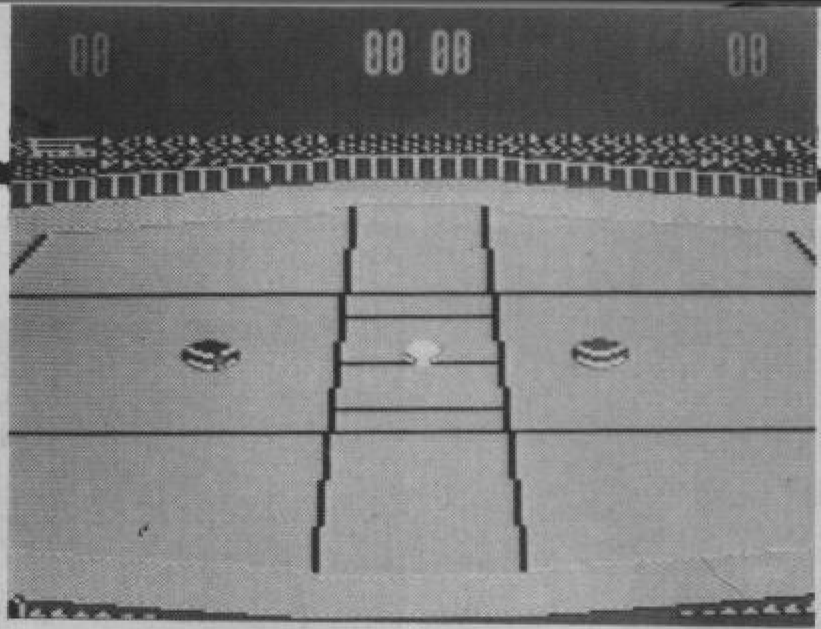
SOUND 64%
Twee title screen tune and the spot effects are rather rare, but they're good whenever used.

HOOKABILITY 86%
Initially strange, but compulsive nevertheless.

LASTABILITY 80%
Plenty to muse over and there's a time limit to beat.

VALUE 82%
A trifle over the odds, but there's plenty to keep you going.

OVERALL 85%
Another high quality arcade adventure from Odin.



XENO

A 'n' F, £8.95 cass, joystick or keys

As the years pass, old sports become antiquated and new ones are introduced. Look at history – the Romans thought it was great fun watching poor deluded Christians being eaten by lions. Then came the origins of football – soldiers kicking the severed heads of slaughtered opponents around the battlefield! The Vikings thought it was a really neat game, but today we don't do things like that (more's the pity). Inter-village rugby matches where



It's fast! It's furious! It's frantic! It's also got a lot of faults that spoil what is a brilliant concept. The graphics are blocky and lacking detail, and sound is weak and virtually non-existent, which doesn't induce much of an atmosphere. Unfortunately the action on the pitch doesn't amount to much either. It's also very frustrating, especially when it's trying to accurately place the pointer. If you fancy a futuristic game of shove ha'penny, give Xeno a whirl. It can be fun.

the pitch could be up to two miles long and the ball was rarely seen by the majority of players would seem very antiquated these days, yet it wasn't that long ago it was in vogue. And what of contemporary sports? What will happen to ten-



What's appealing about this game? Nothing, that's what. The computer is a complete twit and there seems no difference between its 'intelligence' levels – the only way of changing the difficulty level is by changing the length of the 'time out'. The graphics and sound are totally pathetic, with awful use of colour, and the overall impression given is of a shoddy, unfinished product. Xeno's only saving grace is its two player option, but when a game is as boring as this you don't really want to play it anyway. If this is the sport of the future then I'm very, very glad to be stuck with the likes of football and rugby . . .

nis, football and cricket? Will they be replaced by something new? A 'n' F think so, and have produced *Xeno*, a new type of sport which they think could appear in a future age.

Xeno is the sport that future generations will flock to see: two opponents enclosed in their respective saucer-shaped craft attempting to knock a puck into each others goal. Each game is split into four quarters, the duration (in minutes) being set by the player. There is also the option of a one or two player match, with the single player version pitting the participant against the computer.

The computer opponent has ten skill levels, one of which can be chosen before a match commences.

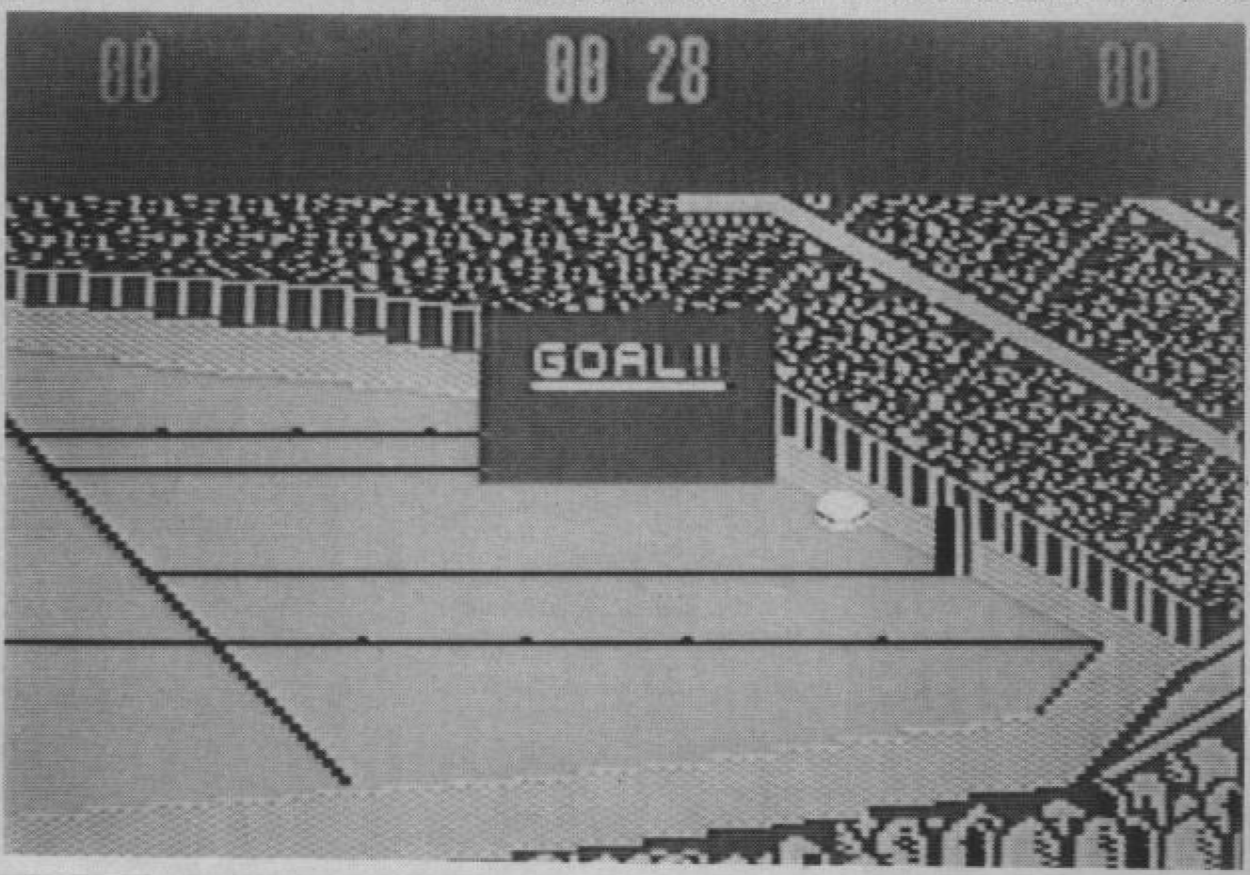
The match is played in a hexagonal arena surrounded by an elasticated wall, with a goal (a rectangular hole) at each end of the pitch. The opponents begin the match facing one another, with the puck on the centre spot. When the klaxon sounds the match can begin. The players make alternate moves, moving a cursor around the pitch using the joystick, and pressing the fire button when the desired spot has been reached. When the fire button is depressed the saucer speeds towards the cursor. When the saucer stops it's the other player's go. The 'time-out' (the length of time a player can take over lining up a shot) is definable, allowing you to take up to nine seconds each turn.

When the saucer is fired it zooms along its preset route, bashing puck or opponent. If the saucer hits the elasticated wall at speed, it rebounds, the speed and angle dependent on the impact. As the puck is bashed around the arena the screen scrolls to keep up with the action. Consequently it's possible to go off the screen, forcing you to dictate your actions from an unseen position.

The object of the game is simple – to score as many goals as possible before the time limit expires. When a goal is scored play begins from the centre spot again, as at the beginning of each quarter. When the time finally expires the score is displayed, allowing you to gloat or cringe over your performance.



Xeno is an all action, reaction game. However speed isn't everything – an absorbing game is, and sadly Xeno is rather dull. The graphics are poor – the main sprites are blocky, although they move smoothly enough around the play area. The crowd in the arena doesn't look much like a crowd though, and does little to create a suitable atmosphere. When playing, things can become very confusing as the positioning cursor appears a fair way from your saucer and even gets lost off screen. Most frustrating. Xeno is excellent in concept, but I'm sorry to say that it could have been executed a lot better.



PRESENTATION 85%
Several options which allow you to change the parameters of the game, and a few neat touches during play.

GRAPHICS 26%
Unimaginative backdrop, use of colour and sprites.

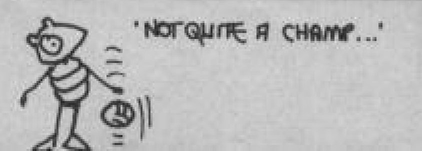
SOUND 4%
Fortunately, very few, uninspiring spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 40%
An initially interesting concept, but the poor gameplay soon gives way to frustration and boredom.

LASTABILITY 24%
The two player option might provide some lasting interest, but on the whole there's little to draw you back to your 64.

VALUE FOR MONEY 21%
Vastly overpriced – a budget price tag would be much more fitting.

OVERALL 30%
A very poor and limited sports 'simulation'.



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LIGHT FORCE

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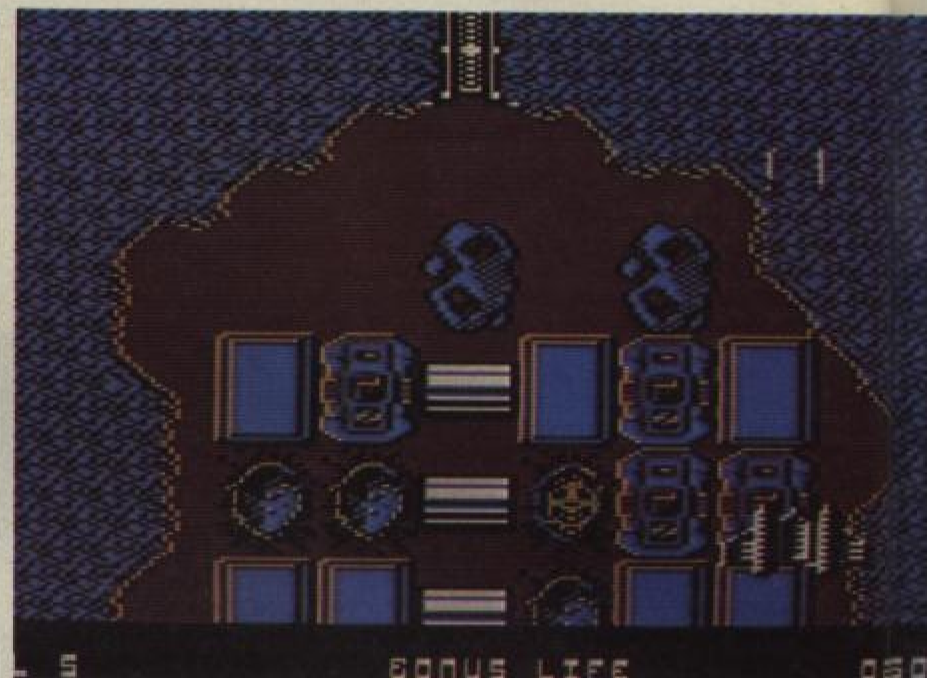
It's a strange Universe isn't it? One minute it seems that man is the only intelligent form of life in existence, the next minute there are millions of alien life-forms swarming all over the place hell bent on destroying him. Well, this is the case here anyway. A dastardly crew of aliens have come from nobody knows, but their numerous craft have begun to land on Regulus, one of the more remote of man's new colony planets. Now this isn't cricket, after all, Regulus is completely undefended, apart from one tiny little spaceship called the Light Force – ready to kick those aliens back to whatever slimy part of the galaxy they came from.

Regulus is a vertically scrolling world which is split into four different areas, each swarming with alien spaceships and ground installations. The emplacements are harmless to the Light Force and provide cannon fodder for a trigger happy pilot (if groups of installations are destroyed bonus points are given). However, the flying aliens are far more dangerous and contact with them, or any one of the many missiles they spew forth, spells certain death for the Light Force pilot. Luckily there's a back-up of four other craft to rely on, and even more can be gained by destroying a number of control centres.

The Light Force is quite a nifty little number and can adjust both its longitudinal and lateral position within its full-screen limitation. The ship can also fire bullets, handy for getting rid of the zillions of aliens which are rip-roaring around the place. Later on in the game it is possible to add to your armoury



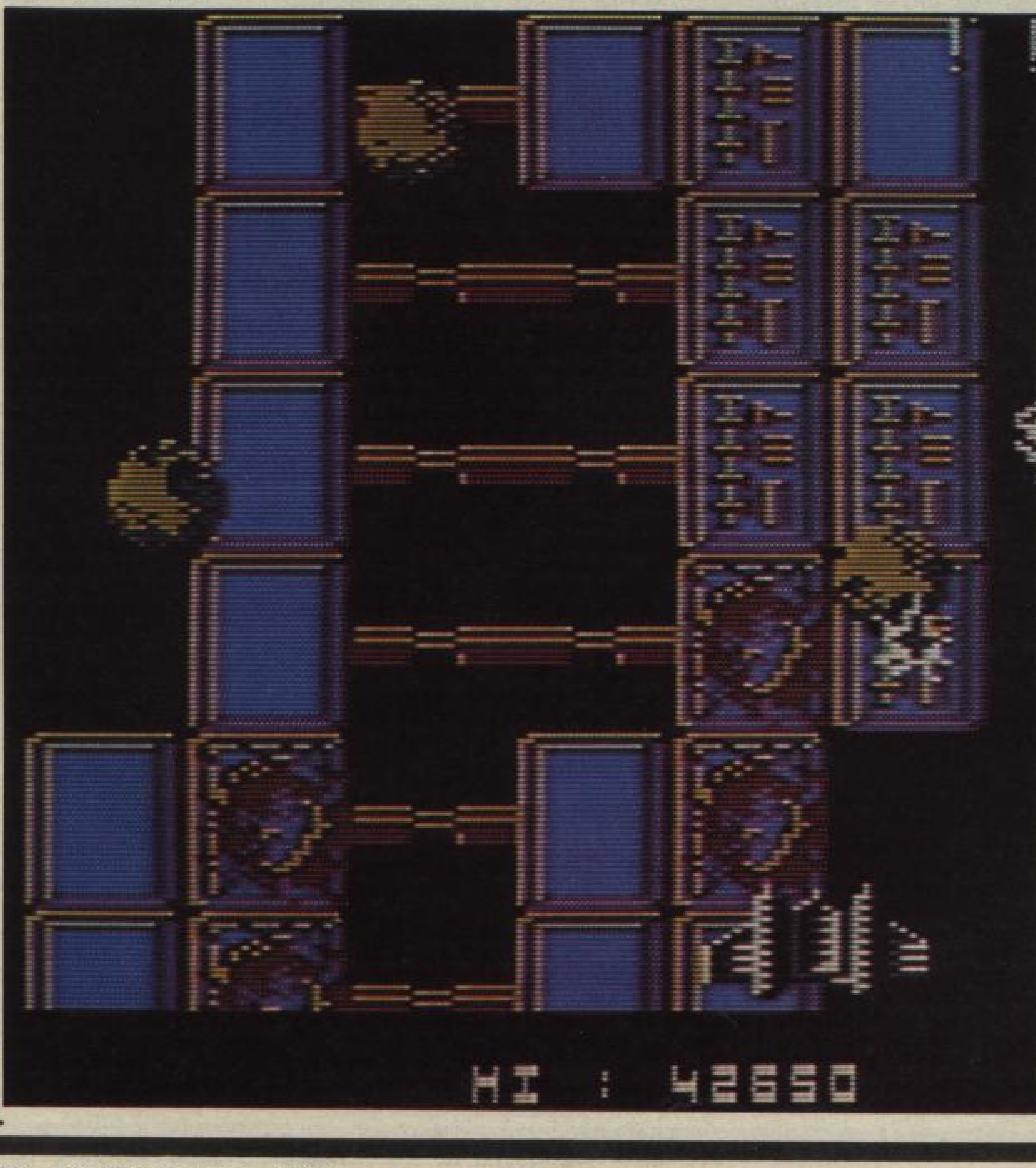
What a superb shoot 'em up! Light Force **is very fast and VERY playable. The graphics are large, colourful and very well defined, especially the unusual but effective explosions. The soundtrack is exceptional and suits the game perfectly. In fact I would go so far as to say it makes the game.** Light Force **would have been brilliant if there were more levels or it got significantly harder the second time round, but even so I didn't find it too repetitive and kept coming back for 'just one more game'. Definitely one for the collection.**

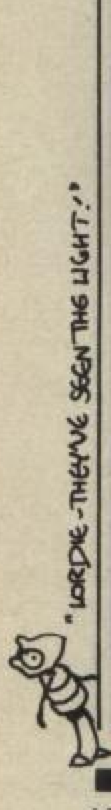


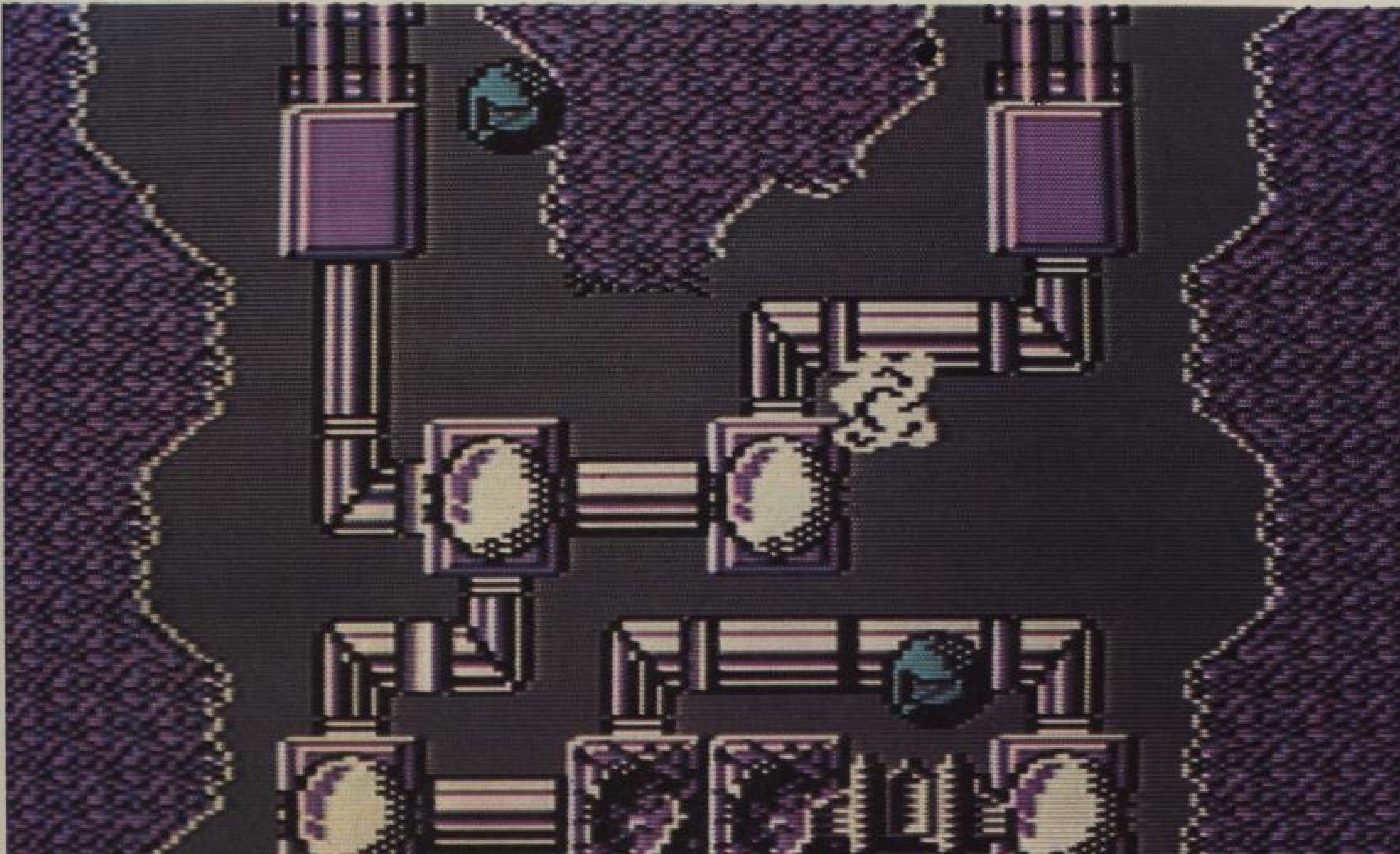


The problem with vertically scrolling shoot 'em ups is the playing area, which is considerably restricted by the size of the Commodore's 25 character-high screen. However the relatively small size of the playing area doesn't seem to affect the playability of Light Force. **Surprising really, as the aliens are rather large and occasionally leave little room to manoeuvre. The graphics are on the whole clear and well defined, and the attention to detail is impressive, for example: the water rippling when a bridge is destroyed. I do feel that the use of colour is a little on the bland side, though. The spot effects are good, and the soundtrack is beautiful; once again Rob has excelled himself.** Light Force **isn't startlingly original, and there are only four different levels, but it's great fun to play and worth the asking price if you want a decent shoot 'em up.**

Orbiting the planet, and being hassled by aliens at the same time. Is it worth being greedy and going for the installations or are the alien ships a priority target?



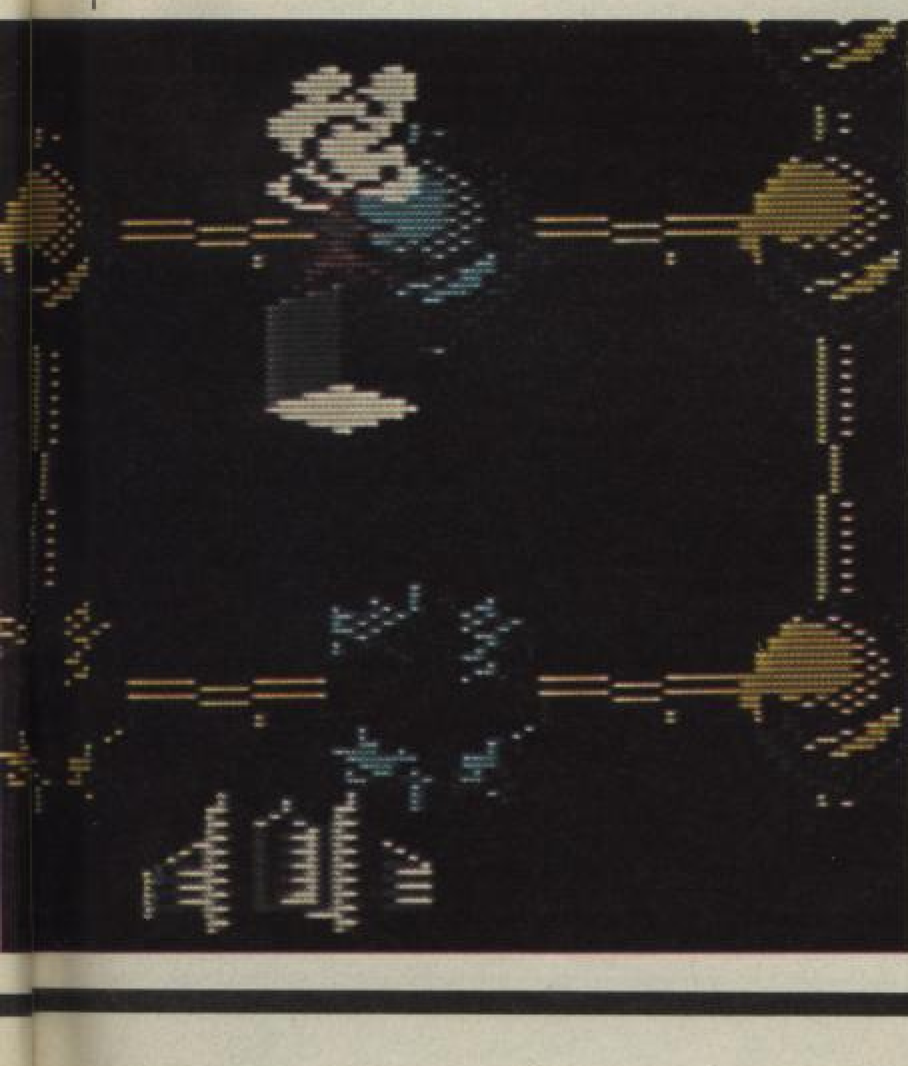




and to pick up a shield which, upon activation, destroys every alien in sight. The aliens vary in size and shape, and some take more shots to kill than others, but they're all united by one intent and purpose: to bring an end to your do-goodery. Consequently the more aliens you destroy the more riled and vicious they become.

The four areas of Regulus have to be patrolled one after the other, each area being a certain distance long. Travel right through an area and you'll be given a status report and a scoring bonus before being whisked away to the next patrol area.

'Destroy Group' for Bonus Points





Ah! A really decent shoot 'em up – something we haven't had for a number of months. It's got all the ingredients of a great game – it's fast, addictive, playable and exhilarating to play. The graphics are neat with plenty of colour, and the alien craft whizz about the screen at high speed. The soundtrack really works well too, adding to the already frantic pace. The only drawback is that the game has only four areas to patrol – things don't get much harder after you've wrapped around to the first screen again, so once you've mastered all four levels you should be able to keep on playing and playing. This drawback aside, Light Force **is still a great shoot 'em up, and the four levels take quite a bit of mastering! Give it a go if you're trigger happy.**

The first patrol run takes place in the space system immediately adjacent to the Regulus system – safely make your way through that and you'll be transported down to the Regulus planet surface, where you must fly over land masses and the electric seas to complete the mission. The following patrol takes place over the space stations which orbit the planet, and after that it's another planetfall trip down to the surface. When the fourth and final mission is completed, it's back to patrol the first . . . those horrible aliens never give up you see, and you'll just have to keep making patrol runs to keep them at bay!

PRESENTATION 92%
Keyboard or joystick option, attractive title screen and a highly original high-score table.

GRAPHICS 88%
Colourful and smooth sprites, imaginative and well drawn backdrops.

SOUND 97%
An atmospheric Rob Hubbard tune complements the pace of the game.

HOOKABILITY 94%
No brainwork required to get into this simple blaster.

LASTABILITY 82%
Plenty of blasting action to keep you enthralled.

VALUE 85%
Not overly expensive for what's on offer.

OVERALL 87%
A must for shoot 'em up addicts.

ZZAP! TEST

TENTH FRAME

US Gold, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick only



From the green, green grass of the highly successful golf simulation *Leader Board*, to the polished and shining alleys. From frilly to two-tone shoes. From a six iron to a fifteen pound ball. These are the changes Access have gone through with their latest program *Tenth Frame*, a ten-pin bowling simulation.

Before play can begin an options screen is presented, firstly offering the choice between league or open bowling. If the former is chosen you then have to input the name of the playing teams, number of players on each team (up to four) and the number of games to play (from one to three). The latter option delivers a screen asking the user to input the number of players (from one to eight) their names, the ability level (either kids, amateur or professional) and the number of games to play. Once this information has been input the bowling can begin.

The screen displays a natural 3D view of the bowling alley from a position above and behind the bowler. The bowler appears at the end of the alley and is completely joystick controlled. Pushing forward on the joystick activates a marker which appears halfway down the alley. Left and right moves it in those directions and using the marker you can aim where the ball is going to go (it crosses the marker as it travels down the alley). Once the marker is in position it can be deactivated by pulling back on the joystick, the bowler himself can then be moved left or right to aim the ball at the desired section of the pins. Once everything is primed the bowler can be made to bowl the ball by pressing the fire button.

A 'speed and hook' gauge at the bottom of the screen is used to control the strength and curve of each players bowl. As the fire button is depressed the speed indicator increases towards the speed zone. When it reaches this the fire button has to be released (otherwise an error will be incurred) and upon release the hook gauge comes into action, the indicator sliding downwards towards the hook zone. When it reaches this the fire button should be pressed, again the timing is critical – too much hook either side of the hook zone could mean the ball missing the pins altogether.

Each player has two attempts at each set of ten pins, a score is given and the next player bowls. The game continues in this fashion, the score sheet being shown after every player has had their turn. The score is kept automatically, and incorporates all the different types of score, including spares, strikes and extras.



This is yet another high quality sports simulation from Access which features a superbly animated main character and excellent playability. However, there's a lot less variety in its gameplay than Leader Board **and consequently it doesn't have as much lasting appeal. Nevertheless, it's still very enjoyable to play and requires a fair bit of practice before any proficiency at the game is achieved. The game is extremely well presented with three skill levels and multi-player and team options. If you're after an unusual, slick and highly playable sports simulation then look this up.**



Superb presentation, suitable graphics and realistic spot FX are all part and parcel of this highly accurate and addictive simulation of ten-pin bowling. Tenth Frame **is simplicity in itself to pick up and get into, however it does lack any great lasting appeal – unless, like me, you enjoy the real thing. I found** Tenth Frame **immensely playable, especially against an opponent (or two) and can wholeheartedly recommend it to anyone interested in the sport.**



Tenth Frame **is so realistic that you can almost imagine the hordes of boring posers and screaming children that usually inhabit the nation's bowling alleys. The skills necessary to master** Tenth Frame **are almost exactly the same as those needed in the real thing, and you must always be on your toes, as one careless shot can really mess up your whole game. As in the real thing, this is best enjoyed when played among a group of friends – well, friends at the beginning anyway. The sound is adjustable, and at its loudest is very impressive. The animation is excellent and the use of colour cannot be faulted. All in all, this is the next best thing to a night out in the local alley.**



PRESENTATION 93%
Comprehensive option system with a multi-player/team challenge facility.

GRAPHICS 81%
Superbly animated bowler and highly believable pin dropping sequences.

SOUND 78%
Sparse, but suits the game perfectly.

HOOKABILITY 95%
A touch tricky to get into, but very addictive from the very first ball.

LASTABILITY 79%
The repetitive nature of the game might mean that non-bowlers may become bored.

VALUE 82%
A touch expensive, but still an essential purchase for bowling fans.

OVERALL 85%
Another slick and extremely well programmed Access sports simulation.


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STRIKE
Experience the exhiliration of big league bowling with outstanding graphics and a true perspective action view.
Multiple levels of play, realistic pin action and automatic scoring make 10th Frame a bowling reality the whole family can enjoy. You may even be tempted to invest in high time bowler shoes and shirt once you've become obsessed with this addictive game.
Another smash hit from the creators of that simulation sensation "Leaderboard".
10th FRAME
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